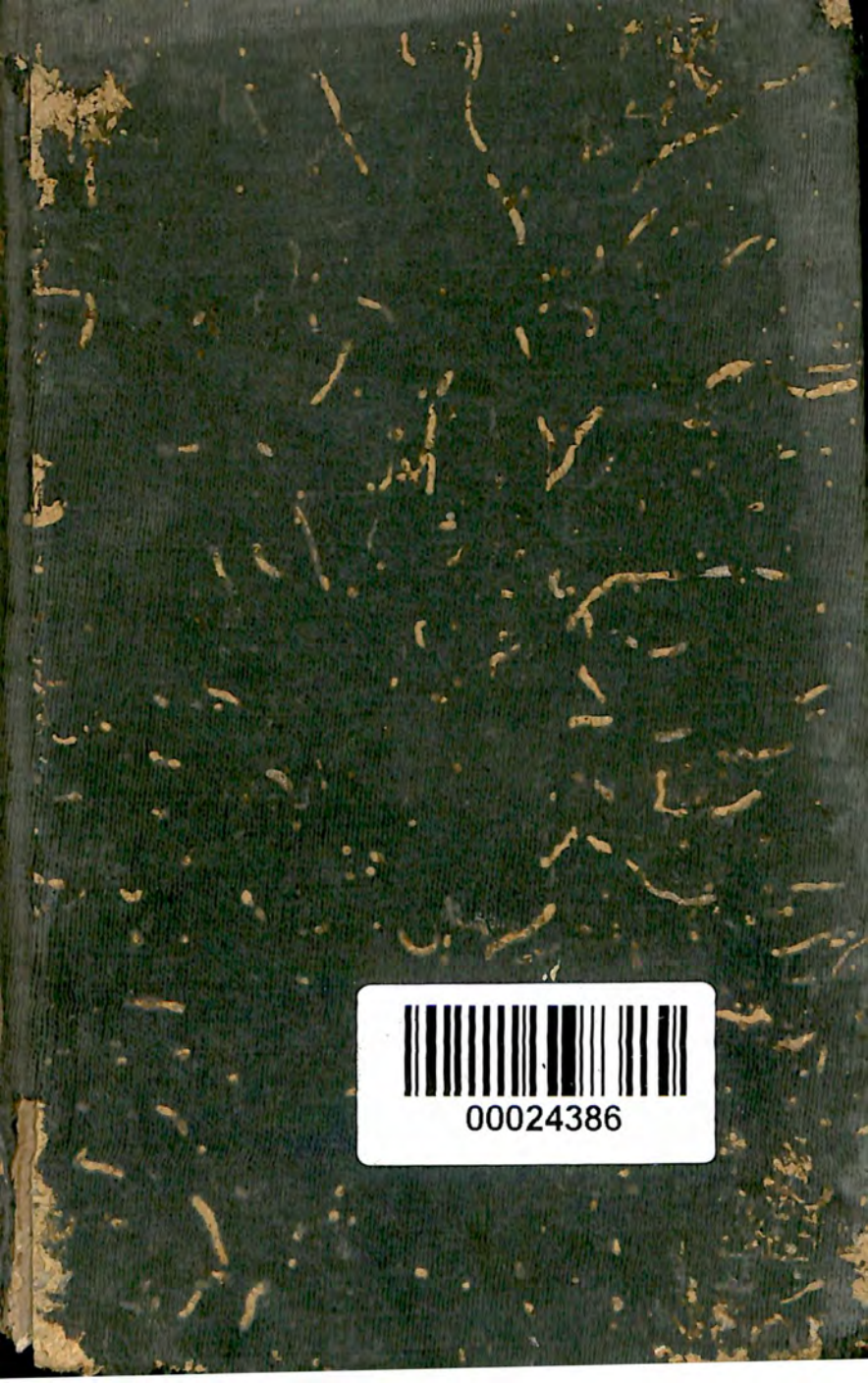
00024386

BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY
TOWN HALL, BOMBAY.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 10 February, 2016

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY

Robt Hancock H. Robinson

Margaret Hill
Mother of Robert Smith

LONDON, LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, BROWN & GREEN & LONGMANS

THE

LIFE & CORRESPONDENCE

of the late

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

EDITED BY HIS SON,

The Rev.d Charles Cuthbert Southey.

VOL. III.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

Yy. c. 2

London:
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN & LONGMANS.
1850.

THE

LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

24386

EDITED BY HIS SON, THE

REV. CHARLES CUTHBERT SOUTHEY, M.A.

CURATE OF PLUMBLAND, CUMBERLAND.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR

LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS,

PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1850.

0002438 3

CONTENTS

OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

CHAPTER XII.

Advantages of Keswick as a Residence. — Opinions, political, social, and religious. — The Language of Madoc defended. — Foreign Politics. — Curious Case of Mental Derangement ameliorated. — Hobbes's Theory of a State of Nature combated. — Mr. Coleridge. — Mr. Wordsworth. — Mr. Duppa's Life of Michael Angelo. — Details of Himself and his Literary Pursuits and Opinions. — Political Changes. — Literary Labours. — Congratulations to Mr. Wynn on the Birth of a Child. — Remarks on the Effects of Time. Bristol Recollections. — Beausobre's History of Manicheism. — Goes to Norwich. — The Annual Review. — Jesuitism in England. — Brief Visit to London and Return. — Quaint Theory of the Origin of Languages. — Thalaba. — Urges Mr. Bedford to visit him at Keswick. — Directions about Specimens of English Poets. — Kehama. — Death of his Uncle John Southey. — Lines upon that Event. — Mountain Excursions. — Reviews of Madoc. — Epic Subjects suggested. — Translation of Palmerin of England. — Papers concerning South America. — Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson. — 1806 - - - - Page 1

CHAPTER XIII.

He undertakes to edit "Kirke White's Remains." — Details of his settling at Greta Hall. — Grant of a small Pension. — Opinions on the Catholic Question. — Progress of "Kirke White's Remains."

— Heavy Deductions from his Pension. — Modern Poetry. — Politics. — Predicts severe Criticisms on the "Specimens of English Poetry." — Recollections of College Friends. — Remarks on Classical Reading. — The Catholic Question. — Spanish Papers wanted. — Mr. Duppa's "Life of Michael Angelo." — Motives for editing "Kirke White's Remains." — Best Season for visiting the Lakes. — Effect upon them of Cloud and Sunshine. — Theory of educating Children for specific Literary Purposes. — Probable Establishment of a New Edinburgh Review. — Playful Letter to the late Hartley Coleridge. — New Edition of Don Quixote projected. — Plan of a Critical Catalogue. — Palmerin of England. — Lay of the Last Minstrel. — Chronicle of the Cid. — Morte D'Arthur. — Pecuniary Difficulties. — Sale of Espriella's Letters. — Specimens of English Poetry. — Overtures made to him to take part in the Edinburgh Review. — Reasons for declining to do so. — 1807. Page 58

CHAPTER XIV.

Brazilian Affairs. — Dislike of leaving Home. — Condemns the Idea of making Peace with Bonaparte. — The Inquisition. — The Sale of his Works. — Grateful Feelings towards Mr. Cottle. — Thoughts on the Removal of his Books to Keswick. — Meeting with the Author of Gebir. — Remarks on Marmion. — Political Opinions. — Kehama. — His Position as an Author. — On Metres. — Population of Spain. — Conduct of the French at Lisbon. — Remarks on Diseases. — Physical Peculiarities. — Spanish Affairs. — Present of Books from Mr. Neville White. — Account of Floating Island in Derwentwater. — He Predicts the Defeat of the French in the Peninsula. — Portuguese Literature. — Infancy of his little Boy. — Poetical Dreams. — Chronicle of the Cid. — Doubts about going to Spain. — Anecdote of an Irish Duel. — Literary Employments. — Advice to a Young Author. — The Convention of Cintra. — Spanish Ballads. — Politics of the Edinburgh Review. — The Quarterly Review set on Foot. — The Chronicle of the Cid. — Kehama. — Articles in the Quarterly Review. — Spanish Affairs. — 1808 129

CHAPTER XV.

Cowper's Translation of Milton's Latin and Italian Poems.—Kehama. —History of Brazil. — Politics. — Literary Advice. — Sketch of Mr. Rickman's Character. — Pleasure at seeing his Writings in Print. — Spanish Affairs. — The Quarterly Review. — Excursion to Durham. — Freedom of his Opinions. — The Cid. — Sensitive Feelings. — Gebir. — Bad Effect of Scientific Studies. — Anxiety about his little Boy. — Mr. Canning wishes to serve him. — Application for Stewardship of Greenwich Hospital Estates. — Mr. Wordsworth's Pamphlet on the Convention of Cintra. — Eclogue of the Alderman's Funeral. — The Quarterly Review. — Sir John Moore's Retreat. — Death of his Landlord. — Mr. Canning's Duel. — Morte D'Arthur. — Eclectic and Quarterly Reviews. — Dr. Collyer's Lectures. — Mr. Coleridge's "Friend." — The Soldier's Love. — Kehama finished. — Pelayo. — War in the Peninsula. — 1809 - Page 201

CHAPTER XVI.

Engagement with Ballantyne for the Edinburgh Annual Register. — Roderick begun. — Professor Wilson. — De Quincey. — The Friend. — Politics. — Madoc defended. — Monthly Review. — Lord Byron. — William Roberts. — Review of the Missionaries. — History of Brazil. — Declining Love of Poetical Composition. — The Lady of the Lake. — Romanism in England. — Poem of Mr. E. Elliott's criticised. — Portuguese Literature. — Edinburgh Annual Register. — Spanish Affairs. — Doubts about the Metre of Kehama. — — Oliver Newman projected. — Kehama. — Comparative Merits of Spenser and Chaucer. — Evil of large landed Proprietors. — Remarks on Writing for the Stage. — Landor's Count Julian. — Political Views. — Gifford wishes to serve him. — Progress of the Register. — L. Goldsmid's Book about France. — Pasley's Essay. — New Review projected. — Death of his Uncle Thomas Southey. — Lucien Bonaparte. — 1810—1811 . . . . Page 270

CHAPTER XVII.

Scott's Vision of Don Roderick.—Advice to a Young Friend on going to Cambridge.—Bell and Lancaster Controversy.—Plan of the Book of the Church.—Wishes to assist Mr. W. Taylor in his Difficulties.—Prospect of being summoned to the Bar of House of Commons.—Shelley at Keswick.—Ugly Fellows.—Oxford.—Herbert Marsh.—Testamentary Letter.—Application for the Office of Historiographer.—Catholic Concessions.—Murder of Mr. Perceval.—State of England.—Edinburgh Annual Register.—Excursion into Durham and Yorkshire.—Visit to Rokeby.—The Quarterly Review.—The Register.—Moralised Sketch of Thalaba.—1811—1812 - - - - Page 314

Drawn & Engraved by W. Westall, A.R.A.

FLOATING ISLAND.

IN DERWENTWATER.

THE

LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

CHAPTER XII.

ADVANTAGES OF KESWICK AS A RESIDENCE. — OPINIONS POLITICAL, SOCIAL, AND RELIGIOUS.—THE LANGUAGE OF MADOC DEFENDED. — FOREIGN POLITICS. — CURIOUS CASE OF MENTAL DERANGEMENT AMELIORATED. — HOBBES'S THEORY OF A STATE OF NATURE COMBATED. — MR. COLERIDGE. — MR. WORDSWORTH. — MR. DUPPA'S LIFE OF MICHAEL ANGELO. — DETAILS OF HIMSELF AND HIS LITERARY PURSUITS AND OPINIONS. — POLITICAL CHANGES. — LITERARY LABOURS. — CONGRATULATIONS TO MR. WYNN ON THE BIRTH OF A CHILD. —REMARKS ON THE EFFECTS OF TIME.—BRISTOL RECOLLECTIONS. — BEAUSOBRE'S HISTORY OF MANICHEISM. — GOES TO NORWICH. — THE ANNUAL REVIEW. — JESUITISM IN ENGLAND. — BRIEF VISIT TO LONDON AND RETURN. — QUAINT THEORY OF THE ORIGIN OF LANGUAGES. — THALABA. — URGES MR. BEDFORD TO VISIT HIM AT KESWICK. — DIRECTIONS ABOUT SPECIMENS OF ENGLISH POETS. — KEHAMA. — DEATH OF HIS UNCLE JOHN SOUTHEY. — LINES UPON THAT EVENT. — MOUNTAIN EXCURSIONS. — REVIEWS OF MADOC. — EPIC SUBJECTS SUGGESTED. — TRANSLATION OF PALMERIN OF ENGLAND. — PAPERS CONCERNING SOUTH AMERICA. — MEMOIRS OF COLONEL HUTCHINSON. — 1806.

My father was now a settled dweller among the mountains of Cumberland; and although for some

years he again and again refers to Lisbon, as a place he earnestly desired to revisit, still this was a project which would probably have assumed a very different aspect, had it come more immediately before him: he would never have removed his family abroad, and he was far too much attached to, and indeed too dependent upon, home comforts and domestic relations, to have made up his mind to leave them even for the furtherance of his chief literary pursuits.

A more thoroughly-domestic man, or one more simple in his mode of living, it would be difficult to picture; and the habits into which he settled himself about this time continued through life, unbroken regularity and unwearied industry being their chief characteristics. Habitually an early riser, he never encroached upon the hours of the night; and finding his highest pleasure and his recreation in the very pursuits necessary for earning his daily bread, he was, probably, more continually employed, than any other writer of his generation. "My actions," he writes about this time to a friend, "are as regular as those of St. Dunstan's quarter-boys. Three pages of history after breakfast (equivalent to five in small quarto printing); then to transcribe and copy for the press, or to make my selections and biographies, or what else suits my humour, till dinner time; from dinner till tea I read, write letters, see the newspaper, and very often indulge in a siesta,—for sleep agrees with me, and I have a good, substantial theory to prove that it must; for as a man who walks much requires to sit down and rest himself, so does the brain, if it be the part most worked, require its

repose. Well, after tea, I go to poetry, and correct and re-write and copy till I am tired, and then turn to anything else till supper; and this is my life,—which, if it be not a very merry one, is yet as happy as heart could wish. At least I should think so if I had not once been happier; and I do think so, except when that recollection comes upon me. And then, when I cease to be cheerful, it is only to become contemplative,—to feel at times a wish that I was in that state of existence which passes not away; and this always ends in a new impulse to proceed, that I may leave some durable monument and some efficient good behind me."

The place of abode which he had chosen for himself, or rather, which a variety of circumstances had combined to fix him in, was, in most respects, well suited to his wishes and pursuits. Surrounded by scenery which combines in a rare degree both beauty and grandeur, the varied and singularly striking views which he could command from the windows of his study, were of themselves a recreation to the mind, as well as a feast to the eye, and there was a perpetual inducement to exercise which drew him oftener from his books than any other cause would have done, though not so often as was advisable for due relaxation both of mind and body. Uninterrupted leisure for a large portion of the year was absolutely essential; and that the long winter of our northern clime, which may be said generally to include half the autumnal and nearly all the spring months, was well calculated to afford him. With the swallows the tourists began to come, and among

them many friends and acquaintances, and so many strangers bearing letters of introduction, that his stores of the latter were being continually increased, and sometimes pleasing and valuable additions made to the former class. During several years his brother Henry, while a student of medicine at Edinburgh, spent his vacations at Keswick, and occasionally some of his more intimate friends came down for a few weeks. These were his golden days; and on such occasions he indulged himself in a more complete holiday, and extended his rambles to those parts of the mountain country which were beyond the circle lying immediately within reach of his own home. These happy times left a permanent memory behind them, and the remembrance of them formed many anecdotes for his later years.

The society thus obtained, while occasionally it was a heavy tax upon his time (to whom time was all his wealth), was, on the whole, more suited to his habits than constant intercourse with the world would have been, and more wholesome than complete seclusion. "London," he writes at this time to his friend Mr. Rickman, who was urging him to make a longer visit than usual, "disorders me by over stimulation. I dislike its society more from reflection than from feeling. Company, to a certain extent, intoxicates me. I do not often commit the fault of talking too much, but very often say what would be better unsaid, and that too in a manner not to be easily forgotten. People go away and repeat single sentences, dropping all that led to them, and all that explains them; and very often, in my hearty hatred of assenta-

tion, I commit faults of the opposite kind. Now, I am sure to find this out myself, and to get out of humour with myself; what prudence I have is not ready on demand; and so it is that the society of any except my friends, though it may be sweet in the mouth is bitter in the belly."

As concerns his social and political opinions, it may be said that they were for many years in a transition state, — rather settling and sobering than changing; indeed, if fairly examined, they altered through life, not so much in the objects he had in view, as in the means whereby those objects were to be gained. He had begun in early youth with those generous feelings towards mankind, which made him believe almost in their perfectibility, but these soon passed away. "There was a time," he wrote, six years earlier, "when I believed in the persuadibility of man, and had the mania of man-mending. Experience has taught me better." But before experience had finished her lessons, he had another stage to pass through; and from having too good an opinion of human nature, he, for a time, entertained far too low a one. Many of his early letters are full of the strongest misanthropical expressions; and in his earliest published prose work, the letters from Spain and Portugal, he gives emphatic utterance to the same feelings. "Man is a beast," he exclaims, "and an ugly beast, and Monboddo libels the ourang-outangs by suspecting them to be of the same family;" but this again was naturally a transition state, and his mature mind judged more justly and much more charitably, being removed alike from the

visionary enthusiasm of his young life, and the self-concentered apathy which succeeded it.

With respect to particular questions of politics, it will be seen in the course of this volume, that on certain prominent subjects, his feelings became strongly enlisted on the same side which the Tory politicians advocated, and in direct opposition to those who professed to be the leaders of Liberal opinions; agreement on some points elicited agreement on others, and, in like manner, disagreement naturally had for its fruits dislike and complete estrangement.

His religious views, also, during middle life, were settling down into a more definite shape, and were drawing year after year nearer to a conformity with the doctrines of the Church of England. However vague and unsettled his thoughts on such subjects were in early youth, he had never doubted the great truths of Revelation: and how rarely this was the case at that period, especially among men of cultivated minds, at least of that stirring democratic school into whose society he had been thrown, the memories of many of the passing generation will bear testimony. "I knew no one who believed" is the startling expression of one of my father's contemporaries, himself a man of intellect and well-stored mind, when speaking of his own passage through that "Valley of the Shadow of Death," and referring to the friends of his own age and standing; and he goes on to say, that he took up the study of the grounds and evidences of Christianity, with the full expectation that he should find no difficulty whatever in refuting to his own satisfaction, what so many others considered

as hardly worthy the serious consideration of reasonable men. Many of those persons whose mental and social qualifications my father most admired were at best but unsettled in their faith; and though almost without exception in later life, they sought and found the only sure resting-place for their hopes and fears, still the frequent intercourse with such men was an ordeal not to be passed through without difficulty or without danger. But he was blest with a pure and truthful heart, strong in the rejection of evil principles; and this, through God's mercy, was confirmed by his solitary, laborious, and dutiful life, united as it was with the constant study of the Holy Scriptures, and at a rather later period, by an acquaintance with the works of most of the great English theologians.

The reader has seen from my father's letters, the reception which Madoc had hitherto met with, and that many of the reviews had been somewhat unfavourable, and had not failed to take full advantage of those defects in the structure of the story of which the author himself seems to have been well aware.

These hostile criticisms, however, had not always their intended effect. Mr. Bedford asks him at the close of the past year, "I should like to know what *you call* the real *faults* of Madoc? Wyndham told Wynn that from what he had seen of the abusive reviews, he was inclined to like the poem exceedingly, and from those specimens speaks of it in high terms: this would make Godwin's nose three times as horrid as ever we thought it."

To this my father replies: —

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Jan. 1. 1806.

"Dear Grosvenor,

"You use Godwin's name as if he had maliciously reviewed Madoc, which I do not by any means suspect or believe, though he has all the will in the world to make me feel his power. The Monthly was rather more dull than he would have made it. I should well like to know who the writer is; for, by the Living Jingo,—a deity whom D. Manuel* conceives to have been worshipped by the Celts,—I would contrive to give him a most righteous clapper-clawing in return.

"Thalaba is faulty in its language. Madoc is not. I am become what they call a Puritan in Portugal, with respect to language, and I dare assert, that there is not a single instance of illegitimate English in the whole poem. The faults are in the management of the story and the conclusion, where the interest is injudiciously transferred from Madoc to Yuhidthiton; it is also another fault, to have rendered *accidents* subservient to the catastrophe. You will see this very accurately stated in the Annual Review: the remark is new, and of exceeding great value. I acknowledge no fault in the execution of any magnitude, except the struggle of the women with Amalahta, which is all clumsily done, and must be rewritten. Those faults which are inherent in and inseparable from the story, as they could not be

* The fictitious name of the writer of "Espriella's Letters."

helped, so are they to be considered as defects or *wants* rather than faults. I mean the division of the poem into two separate stories and scenes, and the inferior interest of the voyage, though a thing of such consequence. But as for unwarrantable liberties of language — there is not a solitary sin of the kind in the whole 9,000 lines. Let me be understood: I call it an unwarrantable liberty to use a verb deponent, for instance, actively, or to form any compound contrary to the strict analogy of the language — such as *tameless* in Thalaba, applied to the tigress. I do not recollect any coinage in Madoc except the word *deicide;* and that such a word exists I have no doubt, though I cannot lay my finger upon an authority, for depend upon it the Jews have been called so a thousand times. That word is unobjectionable. It is in strict analogy — its meaning is immediately obvious, and no other word could have expressed the same meaning. Archaisms are faulty if they are too obsolete. *Thewes* is the only one I recollect; that also has a peculiar meaning, for which there is no equivalent word. But, in short, so very laboriously was Madoc, rewritten and corrected, time after time, that I will pledge myself, if you ask me in any instance why one word stands in the place of another which you, perhaps, may think the better one, to give you a reason, (most probably, *euphoniæ gratiâ,*) which will convince you that I had previously weighed both in the balance. Sir, the language and versification of that poem are as full of profound mysteries as the Butler; and he, I take it, was as full of profundity as the great deep itself.

"I do not know any one who has understood the main merit of the poem so nearly as I wished it to be understood as yourself: the true and intrinsic greatness of Madoc, the real talents of his enemies, and (which I consider as the main work of skill) the feeling of respect for them; — of love even for the individuals, yet with an abhorrence of the *national* cruelties that perfectly reconcile you to their dreadful overthrow. You have very well expressed this.

I have written this at two days, — many sittings, — under the influence of influenza and antimony. I am mending, but very weak, and sufficiently uncomfortable. R. S.

"Jan. 1. Multos et felices."

To Lieut. Southey, H. M. S. Amelia.

"Jan. 1. 1806. (Many happy returns.)

"My dear Tom,

"Don't be cast down, Tom: were I to make laws, no man should be made master and commander till he was thirty years of age. Made you will be at last, and will get on at last as high as your heart can wish: never doubt that, as I never doubt it.

"Don't send me another turtle till I am Lord Mayor, and then I shall be much obliged to you for one; but, for Heaven's sake, not till then. I consigned over all my right and title in the green fat to Wynn, by a formal power sent to Coutts the

banker, who was to look out for him; but of his arrival not a word yet;—ten to one but he is digested. When you are coming home, if you could *bring* a cargo of dried tamarinds I should like them, because they are very seldom to be got in England: I never saw them but once. *Dried*, mark you, in the husk, —not preserved. The acid is exceedingly delightful. Now remember, the words are *when you are coming home*, and *bring*: do not attempt to send them, or there will be trouble, vexation, unnecessary expense, and, most likely, the loss of the thing itself.

"My daughter never sees a picture of ship or boat, but she talks of her uncle in the ship, and as regularly receives the kiss which he sent in the letter. You will be very fond of her if she goes on as well when you come home as she does at present. Harry is hard at work for the last season at Edinburgh, preparing to pass muster and be be-doctored in July. Most likely he will go to Lisbon with me in the autumn; at least I know not how he can be better employed for a few months, than in travelling and spoiling his complexion.

"The extraordinary success of Bonaparte, or, rather, the wretched misconduct of Austria, has left the Continent completely under the control of France. Our plan should be to increase our cruisers and scour the seas effectually, —to take all we can, and keep all we take,—professing that such is our intention, and that we are ready to make peace whenever France pleases, upon the simple terms of leaving off with our winnings. Meantime we ought to take the Cape, the French islands in the East (those in the

West would cost too many lives, and may be left for the Blacks), Minorca, Sicily, and Egypt. If France chooses to have the mainland, the islands should be ours. I suppose we shall go upon some such plan. As for invasion, the old story will begin again in the spring: but it is a thing impossible, and you sailors best know this. Lord St. Vincent used to say, when it was talked of, 'I don't say they can't come,—I only say that they can't come by sea.' What will affect me is the fate of Portugal; for it is now more than ever to be expected that Bonaparte will turn us out, merely to show he can do it. This will be to me a grievous annoyance. It is not unlikely that he will propose peace after these splendid victories, and it is not impossible that Pitt may accept it, to keep his place. Heaven forbid! To give up Malta now would be giving up the national honour; it would be confessing that we had lost the game — whereas we can play the single-handed game for ever. Our bad partners ruin us. The ultimate consequences of the success of France may not be so disastrous to Europe as is generally supposed. Suppose that the Continent be modelled as Bonaparte pleases, — which it will be,—and that it remains so in peace for twenty or thirty years: he will have disabled Austria, it is true, but all the other powers will be strengthened, and a new state created in Italy which did not exist before. Then she will be under French direction: true, but still not French; the difference of language effectually prevents that. Bonaparte will not be a long-lived man; he cannot be, in the ordinary course of nature; there has been, and will be too much wear

and tear of him. His successor, if the succession go regularly on, as I suppose it will, will certainly not inherit his talents, and the first-born Emperor will have all the benefit of imperial education, which is quite sure to make him upon a level with all other sovereign princes. By that time the French generals will have died off, and we must not forget that it is the Revolution which made these men generals, and that men no longer rise according to their merit.

" Jan. 5.

" I have just received the following news:—'Sir, —Am extremely sorry to be obliged to inform you, that a turtle, that I flattered myself would have survived home, from the excessive long passage and performance of quarantine at Cork, Falmouth, and Sea Reach, died in the former port, with every one on board the ship.—Respectfully, y^r^ much obliged and obedient servant, STEPHEN T. SELK.'—So much for the turtle! I think if Government will make such beasts perform quarantine, they ought to pay for the loss. Surfeits and indigestions they may bring into the city, but of the yellow fever there can be no danger. The Court of Aldermen should take it into consideration.

" And now, to finish this letter of gossip. I am in the midst of reviewing, which will be over by the time this reaches you, even if, contrary to custom, it should reach you in regular course. Espriella also will, by that time, be gone to press. This, and the History of the Cid, I shall have to send you in the summer. No further news of the sale;—in fact, if

the edition of 500 goes off in two years, it will be a good sale for so costly a book. I hope it will not be very long before Thalaba goes to press a second time. God bless you!

R. S."

To Messrs. Longman and Rees.

"Jan. 5. 1806.

"Dear Sirs,

"A gentleman in this neighbourhood, Mr. ——, is printing some poems at his own expense, which Faulder is to publish; and he has applied to me to request that your name also may appear in the title-page. In such cases, the only proper mode of proceeding is to relate the plain state of the matter. His verses are good for nothing; and not a single copy can possibly sell, except what his acquaintance may purchase: but he has been labouring under mental derangement, — the heaviest of all human calamities, — and the passion which he has contracted for rhyming has changed the character of his malady, and made him from a most miserable being, a very happy one. Under these circumstances you will not, perhaps, object to gratifying him, and depositing copies of his book in your wareroom, for the accommodation of the spiders. He tells me his MS. is at ——, if you think fit to inspect it: this trouble you will hardly take: the poems are as inoffensive as they are worthless. I shall simply tell him that I have made the application, without giving him any reason to expect its success. You will, of course,

use your own judgment, only I will beg you to signify your assent or dissent to him himself. . .

. .

Believe me,
Yours truly,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

The following curious letter needs some explanation. My father had sent the MS. of his letters, under the assumed character of Espriella, to his friend Mr. Rickman for his remarks, who was anxious that some strong condemnation of pugilism should not appear, as he considered it acted as a sort of *safety-valve* to the bad passions of the lower orders, and in some cases prevented the use of the knife: and he goes on to say, — "The abstract love of bloodshed is a very odd taste, but I am afraid very natural; the increase of gladiatorial exhibitions at Rome is not half so strong a proof of this as the Mexican sacrifices, which I think commenced not till about A. D. 1300,—and by a kind of accident or whim, — and lasted above 200 years, with a horrible increase, and with the imitation of all the neighbouring states. This last circumstance is a wonderful proof of the love of blood in the human mind. Without that, the practice must have raised the strongest aversion around Mexico. I believe Leviathan Hobbes says, 'that a state of nature is a state of war, *i. e.* bloodshed.' I begin to think so too; else why has Nature made such a variety of offensive as well as defensive armour in all her animal and vegetable productions?

It seems a perverted industry, and is unexplainable, unless we believe Hobbes." *

My father's reply shows he was of a different opinion.

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Jan. 15. 1806.

"Dear Rickman,

"Before I speak of myself, let me say something upon a more important subject. Nature has given *offensive* armour for two reasons; in the first place, it is defensive because it serves to intimidate; a better reason is, that claws and teeth are the tools with which animals must get their living; and that the general system of one creature eating another is a benevolent one, needs little proof; there *must* be death, and what can be wiser than to make death subservient to life. As for a state of nature, the phrase, as applied to man, is stark naked nonsense. Savage man is a degenerated animal. My own belief is, that the present human race is not much more than six thousand years old, according to the concurrent testimony of all rational history. The Indian records are good for nothing. But add as many millenniums as you will, the question, 'How came they here at first?' still occurs. The infinite series is an infinite absurdity; and to suppose them growing like mushrooms or maggots in mud, is as bad. Man must have been *made* here, or *placed* here with

* J. R. to R. S., Jan. 9. 1806.

sufficient powers, bodily and mental, for his own support. I think the most reasonable opinion is, that the first men had a knowledge of language and of religion; in short, that the accounts of a golden or patriarchal age are, in their foundation, true. How soon the civilised being degenerates under unfavourable circumstances, has been enough proved by history. Freewill, God, and final retribution solve all difficulties. That Deity cannot be understood, is a stupid objection; without one we can understand nothing. I cannot put down my thoughts methodically without much revision and re-arrangement; but you may see what I would be at; it is no difficult matter to harpoon the Leviathan, and wound him mortally.

. . . . . .

You may account by other means for the spread of the Mexican religion than by the love of blood. Man is by nature a religious animal; and if the elements of religion were not innate in him, as I am convinced they are, sickness would make him so. You will find that all savages connect superstition with disease, —some cause, which they can neither comprehend nor control, affects them painfully, and the remedy always is to appease an offended Spirit, or drive away a malignant one. Even in enlightened societies, you will find that men more readily believe what they *fear* than what they hope: . . . . religions, therefore, which impose privations and self-torture have always been more popular than any other. How many of our boys' amusements consist in bearing pain?—grown children like to do the

same from a different motive. You will more easily persuade a man to wear hair-cloth drawers, to flog himself, or swing upon a hook, than to conform to the plain rules of morality and common sense. I shall have occasion to look into this subject when writing of the spirit of Catholicism, which furnishes as good an illustration as the practices of the Hindoos. Here, in England, Calvinism is the popular faith. . . . Beyond all doubt, the religion of the Mexicans is the most diabolical that has ever existed. It is not, however, by any means, so mischievous as the Brahminical system of caste, which, wherever it exists, has put a total stop to the amelioration of society. The Mexicans were rapidly advancing. Were you more at leisure, I should urge you to bestow a week's study upon the Spanish language, for the sake of the mass of information contained in their travellers and historians. . . . . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Walter Scott, Esq., Advocate.

"Greta Hall, Keswick, Feb. 4. 1806.

"My dear Sir,

"We are under considerable uneasiness respecting Coleridge, who left Malta early in September to return overland from Naples, was heard of from Trieste, and has not been heard of since. Our hope is, that, finding it impracticable to proceed, he may have returned, and be wintering at Naples or in Sicily.

"Wordsworth was with me last week; he has of late been more employed in correcting his poems than in writing others; but one piece he has written, upon the ideal character of a soldier, than which I have never seen any thing more full of meaning and sound thought. The subject was suggested by Nelson's most glorious death, though having no reference to it. He had some thoughts of sending it to the Courier, in which case you will easily recognise his hand.

"Having this occasion to write, I will venture to make one request. My friend Duppa is about to publish a Life of Michael Angelo;—the book will be a good book, for no man understands his art better. I wish, when it comes in course of trial, you would save it from Judge Jeffrey, or intercede with him for as favourable a report as it may be found to deserve. Duppa deserves well of the public, because he has, at a very considerable loss, published those magnificent heads from Raffaelle and Michael Angelo, and is publishing this present work without any view whatever to profit; indeed, he does not print copies enough to pay his expenses.

"Mrs. Southey and her sister join me in remembrance to Mrs. Scott. I know not whether I shall ever again see the Tweed and the Yarrow, yet should be sorry to think I should not. Your scenery has left upon me a strong impression,—more so for the delightful associations which you and your country poets have inseparably connected with it. I am going in the autumn, if Bonaparte will let me, to streams as classical and as lovely—the Mondego of

Camoens, the Douro, and the Tagus; but I shall not find such society on their banks.

"Remember me to my two fellow-travellers. Heaven keep them and me also from being the subject of any farther experiments upon the infinite compressibility of matter.

Believe me,

Yours very truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

"If Hogg should publish his poems, I shall be very glad to do what little I can in getting subscribers for him."

To the Rev. Nicholas Lightfoot.

"Keswick, Feb. 8. 1806.

"My dear Friend,

"You tell me to write as an egotist, and I am well disposed so to do; for what else is it that gives private letters their greatest value, but the information they bring us of those for whom we are interested? I saw your marriage in the papers, and perhaps one reason why my letter has remained so long unfinished in my desk is, a sort of fear lest I should mention it after death might have dissolved it,—a sort of superstitious feeling to which I am subject. I wish you — being a father myself — as large a family as you can comfortably bring up, and if you are not provided with a godfather upon the next occasion, I beg you to accept of me, as an old and

very affectionate friend; 'tis a voluntary kind of relationship, in which it would gratify me to stand to a child of yours, and which I should consider as a religious pledge on my part for any useful, kind, and fatherly offices which it might ever happen to be in my power to perform.

"I have for some time looked on with pleasure to the hope of seeing you next autumn, when, in all probability, if the situation of affairs abroad does not prevent me, I shall once more visit Portugal, not for health's sake, but to collect the last materials for my history, and to visit those parts of the kingdom which I have not yet seen. In this case my way will lie through Devonshire, and I will stop a day or two at Crediton, and talk over old times.

"You inquire of the wreck of the Seward family, — a name as dear to my inmost heart as it can be to yours. No change has taken place among them for some years, as I understand from Duppa, who was my guest here the autumn before last, and with whom I have an occasional correspondence.

"I passed through Oxford two years ago, and walked through the town at four o'clock in the morning; the place never before appeared to me half so beautiful. I looked up at my own windows, and, as you may well suppose, felt as most people do when they think of what changes time brings about.

"If you have seen or should see the Annual Review, you may like to know that I have borne a great part in it thus far, and I may refer you for the state of my opinions to the Reviewals of the Periodical Accounts of the Baptist Mission, vol. i., of

Malthus's Essay on Population, Miles's History of the Methodists, and the Transactions of the Missionary Society, vol. ii. and iii., and of the Report of the Society for the Suppression of Vice, vol. iii. In other articles you may trace me from recollections of your own, by family likeness, by a knowledge of Spanish literature, and by a love of liberty and literature freely and warmly expressed. I was ministerial under Addington, regarded his successor with the utmost indignation, and am exceedingly well pleased at the present changes. Time, you say, moderates opinions as it mellows wine. My views and hopes are certainly altered, though the heart and soul of my wishes continues the same. It is the world that has changed, not I. I took the same way in the afternoon that I did in the morning, but sunset and sunrise make a different scene. If I regret any thing in my own life, it is that I *could* not take orders, for of all ways of life that would have best accorded with my nature; but I could not get in at the door.

"In other respects time has not much altered me. I am as thin as ever, and to the full as noisy: making a noise in any way whatever is an animal pleasure with me, and the louder it is the better. Do you remember the round hole at the top of the staircase, opposite your door? *

"Coleridge is daily expected to return from Malta, where he has been now two years for his health. I inhabit the same house with his wife and children,—perhaps the very finest single spot in England. We overlook Keswick Lake, have the Lake of Bassen-

* See p. 87.

thwaite in the distance on the other side, and Skiddaw behind us. But we only sojourn here for a time. I may, perhaps, be destined to pass some years in Portugal,—which, indeed, is my wish,—or, if otherwise, must ultimately remove to the neighbourhood of London, for the sake of the public libraries.

"My dislike was not to schoolmasters, but to the rod, which I dare warrant you do not make much use of. Here is a long letter, and you have in it as many great I's as your heart can wish. It will give me much pleasure to hear again from you, and to know that your family is increased. If I cannot be godfather now, let me put in a claim in time for the next occasion; but I hope you will write to tell me that three things have been promised and vowed in *my* name by proxy.* No man can more safely talk of defying the world, the flesh, and the devil. With the world my pursuits are little akin; the flesh and I quarrelled long ago, and I have been nothing but skin and bone ever since; and as for the devil, I have made more ballads in his abuse than anybody before me.

"God bless you, Lightfoot!

Yours very affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Feb. 11. 1806.

"My dear Rickman,

". . . . . .

. . It seems to me that the Grenvilles

get into power just as they could wish, but that it is otherwise with Fox and Grey. They are pledged to parliamentary reform, and in this their other colleagues will not support them. It will be put off at first with sufficient plausibility, under the plea of existing circumstances; but my good old friend Major Cartwright (who is as noble an old Englishman as ever was made of extra best superfine flesh and blood) will find that existing circumstances have no end; there must come a time when it will appear, that if the question be not honestly brought forward, it has been given up as the price of their admission to power; and in that case, Fox had better for himself have died, instead of the other minister who had nothing to lose in the opinion of wise men. So that I am not sure that Fox's friends ought to rejoice at his success.

"But *quoad* Robert Southey, things are different. I have a chance of getting an appointment at Lisbon (this, of course, is said to yourself only); either the Secretaryship of Legation, or the Consulship,—whichever falls vacant first,—has been asked for me, and Lord Holland has promised to back the application. . . . . I shall follow my own plans,—relying upon nobody but myself, and shall go to Lisbon in the autumn: if Fortune finds me there, so much the better, but she shall never catch me on the wild goose chase after her.

"I want Tom to be an admiral, that when he is fourscore he may be killed in a great victory and get a monument in St. Paul's; for this reason, I have some sort of notion that one day or other I may have one

there myself, and it would be rather awkward to get among so many sea captains, unless one had a friend among them to introduce one to the mess-room. It is ridiculous giving the captains the honours, — a colonel in the army has the same claim; better build a pyramid at once, and insert their names as they fall in this marble gazette. . . . . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Lieutenant Southey, H. M. S. Amelia.

"Keswick, February 15. 1806.

"A world of events have taken place since last I wrote, — indeed so as almost to change the world here. Pitt is dead, Fox and the Grenvilles in place, Wynn Under Secretary of State in the Home Office. I have reason to expect something; of the two appointments at Lisbon which would suit me, whichever falls vacant first is asked for me; both are in Fox's gift, and Lord as well as Lady Holland speak for me. It is likely that one or other will be vacated ere long, and if I should not succeed, then Wynn will look elsewhere. Something or other will certainly turn up ere it be very long. I hope also something may some way or other be done for you; you shall lose nothing for want of application on my part.

"St. Vincent supersedes Cornwallis in the Channel fleet: Sir Samuel was made admiral in the last list of promotions. As for peace or war, one knows not how to speculate. If I were to guess anything, it

would be, that by way of getting all parties out of the way with credit, Bonaparte may offer us Malta, which he cannot take, as an indemnification for Hanover, which we must lose. I should be glad this compromise were made. You have news enough here to set you in a brown study for the rest of the day. I will only add an anecdote, which I believe is not in the papers, and which sailors will like to know. The flag of the Victory was to be buried with Nelson, but the sailors, when it was lowering into the grave, tore it in pieces to keep as relics. His reward has been worthy of the country, — a public funeral of course and a monument, besides monuments of some kind or other in most of the great cities by private subscriptions. His widow made Countess with 2000*l.* a year, his brother an Earl with an adequate pension, and 200,000*l.* to be laid out in the purchase of an estate, never to be alienated from the family. Well done England!

"As several of my last letters have been directed to St. Kitts, I conclude that by this time one or other may have reached you. Yours is good news so far as relates to your health, and to the probability of going to Halifax, — better summer quarters than the Islands. If you should go there, such American books as you may fall in with will be curiosities in England. The New York publications I conclude travel so far north; reviews and magazines, novels or poetry, — anything of real American growth, I shall be glad to have. Keep a minute journal there, and let nothing escape you. . . .

"Did I tell you that I have promised to supply

the lives of the Spanish and Portuguese authors in the remaining volumes of Dr. Aikin's great General Biography? This will not interfere with my own plans; where it does, it is little more than printing the skeleton of what is hereafter to be enlarged. I can tell you nothing of the sale of Madoc, except that Longman has told me nothing, which is proof enough of slow sale; but if the edition goes off in two years, or indeed in three, it will be well for so costly a book. There is a reaction in these things; my poems make me known first, and then I make the poems known: as I rise in the world the books will sell. I have occasional thoughts of going on with Kehama now when my leisure time approaches, to keep my hand in, and to leave it for publication next winter. Not a line has been added to it since you left me.

"No news yet of Coleridge: we are seriously uneasy about him: it is above two months since he ought to have been home: our hope is, that finding the continent overrun by the French, he may have returned to Malta. Edith's love.

"God bless you, Tom!

R. S."

To Richard Duppa, Esq.

"Feb. 23. 1806.

"Dear Duppa,

"Nicholson, I see, sets up a new review. Carlisle ought to get you well taken care of there. Need you be told the history of all reviews? If a book

falls into the hands of one who is neither friend nor enemy, — which for a man known in the world is not very likely — the reviewer will find fault to show his own superiority, though he be as ignorant of the subject upon which he writes as an ass is of metaphysics, or John Pinkerton of Welsh antiquities and Spanish literature. As your book, therefore, has little chance of fair play, get it into the hands of your friends. Have you any access to the Monthly?

"For politics. As far as the public is concerned, God be praised! How far I may be concerned, remains to be seen. My habits are now so rooted, that everything not connected with my own immediate pursuit seems of secondary consequence, and as far as relates to myself, hardly worth a hope or fear. So far as anything can be given me which will facilitate that pursuit, I greatly desire it, and have good reason to expect the best. But nothing that can happen will in any way affect my plan of operations for the present year. I go to London in a month's time, I go to Lisbon in the autumn, and in the interim must work like a negro. By the by, cannot you give me a letter to Bartolozzi? he will like to see an Englishman who can talk to him of the persons with whom he was acquainted in England.

"I am reading an Italian History of Heresies in four folios, by a certain Domenico Bernino. If there be one thing in the world which delights me more than another, it is ecclesiastical history. This book of Bernino's is a very useful one for a man who knows something of the subject, and is aware how much is to be believed, and how much is not.

"My reviewing is this day finished for ever and ever, amen. Our fathers who are in the Row will, I daresay, wish me to continue at the employment, but I am weary of it. Seven years have I been, like Sir Bevis, preying upon 'rats and mice,' and such small deer,' and for the future will fly at better game. It is best to choose my own subjects.

"You mentioned once to me certain prophetical drawings by a boy. Did you see them, or can you give me any particulars concerning them? for I find them connected with Joanna Southcote, of whose prophecies I have about a dozen pamphlets, and about whom Don Manuel is going to write a letter. I like our friend Huntingdon's Bank of Faith so well on a cooler perusal, that I shall look for two other of his works at the shop of his great friend, Baker, in Oxford Street. That man is a feature in the age, and a great man in his way. People who are curious to see extraordinary men, and go looking after philosophers and authors only, are something like the good people in genteel life, who pay nobody knows what for a cod's head, and don't know the luxury of eating sprats. Oh! Wordsworth sent me a man the other day, who was worth seeing; he looked like a first assassin in Macbeth as to his costume, but he was a rare man. He had been a lieutenant in the navy, was scholar enough to quote Virgil aptly, had turned Quaker or semi-Quaker, and was now a dealer in wool somewhere about twenty miles off. He had seen much and thought much, his head was well stored, and his heart in the right place.

"It is five or six and twenty years since he was at Lisbon, and he gave me as vivid a description of the Belem Convent, as if the impression in his memory was not half a day old. Edridge's acquaintance, Thomas Wilkinson, came with him. They had both been visiting an old man of a hundred in the Vale of Lorton, and it was a fine thing to hear this Robert Foster describe him. God bless you!

R. S."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq.

"Feb. 28. 1806.

"My dear Wynn,

"The intelligence* in your letter has given me more pleasure than I have often felt. In spite of modern philosophy, I do not believe that the first commandment is an obsolete statute yet, and I am very sure that man is a better being, as well as a happier one, for being a husband and a father. May God bless you in both relations of life!

"I shall be in London about the time when you are leaving it. . . . It is long since we have met, and I shall be sorry to lose one of those opportunities of which life does not allow very many. It will be nearly two years since you were here, and if our after meetings are to be at such long intervals,

* Of the birth of a child.

there are not many to look on to. Many things make me feel old;—ten years of marriage; the sort of fatherly situation in which I have stood to my brother Henry, now a man himself; the premature age at which I commenced author; the death of all who were about me in childhood; a body not made of lasting materials, and some wear and tear of mind. You once remarked to me how time strengthened family affections, and, indeed, all early ones: one's feelings seem to be weary of travelling, and like to rest at home. I had a proof the other night in my sleep how the mere lapse of time changes our disposition; I thought, of all men in the world, ——* called upon me, and that we were heartily glad to see each other. They who tell me that men grow hard-hearted as they grow older, have had a very limited view of this world of ours. It is true with those whose views and hopes are merely and vulgarly worldly; but when human nature is not perverted, time strengthens our kindly feelings, and abates our angry ones. . . . .

"God bless you!

Yours affectionately,

R. S."

* A Westminster schoolfellow, from whom he had received much brutal treatment.

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, March 6. 1806.

"I am writing, Grosvenor, as you know, the History of Portugal,—a country of which I probably know more than any foreigner, and as much as any native. Now has it come athwart me, this afternoon, how much more accurate, and perhaps, a thousand years hence, more valuable, a book it would be, were I to write the History of Wine Street below the Pump, the street wherein I was born, recording the revolutions of every house during twenty years. It almost startles me to see how the events of private life, within my own knowledge, *et quorum pars maxima, etc.*, equal or outdo novel and comedy; and the conclusion to each tale—the *mors omnibus est communis*,—makes me more serious than the sight of my own grey hairs in the glass; for the hoar frosts, Grosvenor, are begun with me. Oh, there would be matter for moralising in such a history, beyond all that history offers. The very title is a romance. You, in London, need to be told that Wine Street is a street in Bristol, and that there is a pump in it, and that by the title I would mean to express, that the historian does not extend his subject to that larger division of the street which lies above the pump. You, I say, need all these explanations, and yet, when I first went to school, I never thought of Wine Street and of that pump without tears, and such a sorrow at heart, as by Heaven! no child of mine shall ever suffer while I am living to prevent

it; and so deeply are the feelings connected with that place rooted in me, that, perhaps, in the hour of death, they will be the last that survive. Now, this history, it is most certain that I, the Portuguese historiographer, &c. &c. &c. shall never have leisure, worldly motive, nor perhaps heart to write; and yet, now being in tune, I will give you some of the recollections whereof it would be composed, catching them as they float by me; and as I am writing, forms enough thicken upon me to people a solitary cell * in Bedlam, were I to live out the remainder of a seventy years' lease.

"Let me begin with the church at the corner. I remember the *old* church: a row of little shops were built before it, above which its windows received light; and on the leads which roofed them, crowds used to stand at the chairing of members, as they did to my remembrance when peace was proclaimed after the American war. I was christened in that old church, and at this moment vividly remember our pew under the organ, of which I certainly have not thought these fifteen years before. —— was then the rector, a humdrum somnificator, who, God rest his soul for it! made my poor mother stay at home Sunday evenings, because she could not keep awake after dinner to hear him. A

* Baron Trenck, in his account of his long and wretched imprisonment, says, "I had lived long and much in the world; vacuity of thought, therefore, I was little troubled with." May not this give some clue to the cause why solitary confinement makes some insane and does not affect others? I have read somewhere of a man who said, if his cell had been *round* he must have gone mad, but there was a *corner* for the eye to rest upon. — ED.

worldly-minded man succeeded, and effected, by dint of begging and impudence, a union between the two parishes of Christ Church and St. Ewins*, for no other conceivable reason than that he might be rector of both. However, he was a great man; and it was the custom once a year to catechise the children, and give them, if they answered well, a good plum-cake a-piece in the last day of the examination, called a cracknell, and honestly worth a groat; and I can remember eating my cracknell, and being very proud of the praise of the curate (who was a really good man), when he found that I knew the etymology of *Decalogue*, — for be it known to your worship, that I did not leave off loving plum-cake when I begun my Greek, nor have I left it off now when I have almost forgotten it. But I must turn back to the *pew*, and tell you how in my very young days a certain uncle Thomas, who would make a conspicuous figure in the history of Wine Street below the pump, once sentenced me to be deprived of my share of pie on Sunday, for some misdemeanour there committed, — I forget what, — whether talking to my brother Tom, or reading the Revelations there during the sermon, for *that* was my favourite part of the Christian religion, and I always amused myself with the scraps from it after the collects, whenever the prayer-book was in my hand.

"There were quarter-boys to this old church clock, as at St. Dunstan, and I have many a time

* These are still held by one person; but as the population of the latter is stated at fifty-five only in the Clergy List, and the income of the two under 400*l.*, it would seem to be an unobjectionable union.— Ed.

stopt with my satchel on my back to see them strike. My father had a great love for these poor quarter-boys, who had regulated all his movements for about twenty years; and when the church was rebuilt, offered to subscribe largely to their re-establishment; but the Wine Streeters had no taste for the arts, and no feeling for old friends, and God knows what became of the poor fellows; but I know that when I saw them represented in a pantomime, which was called Bristol, and got up to please the citizens, I cannot say, whether I felt more joy at seeing them, or sorrow in thinking they were only represented — only stage quarter-boys, and not the real ones.

"The church was demolished, and sad things were said of the indecencies that occurred in removing the coffins for the new foundation to be laid. We had no interest in this, for our vault was at Ashton. I sent you once, years ago, a drawing of this church. It is my only freehold — all the land I possess in the world — and is now full — no matter! I never had any feeling about a family grave till my mother was buried in London, and that gave me more pain than was either reasonable or right. My little girl lies with my dear good friend Mrs. Danvers. I, myself, shall lie where I fall; and it will be all one in the next world. Once more to Christ Church. I was present in the heart of a crowd when the foundation stone was laid, and read the plates wherein posterity will find engraved the name of Robert Southey — for my father was church-warden — by the same token that that year he gave me a penny to go to the fair instead of a shilling as

usual, being out of humour or out of money; and I, referring to a common phrase, called him a *generous* churchwarden. There was money under the plate. I put some half-pence which I had picked out for their good impressions; and Winter, the bookseller, a good medal of the present king. . . . . Shame on me for not writing on foolscap! Vale!

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"March 15. 1806.

"My dear Rickman,

"My last week has been somewnat desultorily employed in going through Beausobre's History of Manicheism, and in sketching the life of D. Luisa de Carvajal, an extraordinary woman of high rank, who came over to London in James the First's time, to make proselytes to the Catholic religion, under the protection of the Spanish ambassador. It is a very curious story, and ought to be related in the history of that wretched king, who beheaded Raleigh to please the Spaniards.

"Beausobre's book is one of the most valuable that I have ever seen; it is a complete Thesaurus of early opinions, philosophical and theological. It is not the least remarkable circumstance of the Catholic religion, that it has silently imbibed the most absurd parts of most of the heresies which it opposed and persecuted. I do not conceive Manes to have been a fanatic: there is too much philosophy in the whole of his system,

even in the mythology, for that. His object seems to have been to unite the superstitions of the East and West; unluckily, both priests and magi united against the grand scheme, — the Persians flayed him alive, and the Catholics roasted his disciples whenever they could catch them. Beausobre, as I expected, has perceived the similarity between Buddas and the Indian impostor; but he supposes that he came from the East. I am inclined to think otherwise, because I have found elsewhere that the Adam whose footstep is shown in Ceylon, was a Manichæan travelling disciple, though both Moors and Portuguese very naturally attributed this story to their old acquaintance. A proof this that the immediate disciples of Manes were successful; besides, the Asiatic fables are full of resemblances to Christianity. . .

"If there be any one thing in which the world has decidedly degenerated, it is in the breed of Heresiarchs: they were really great men in former times, devoting great knowledge and powerful talents to great purposes. In our days they are either arrant madmen or half rogues. . . . I am about to be the St. Epiphanius of Richard Brothers and Joanna Southcote; what say you to paying these worthies a visit some morning? the former is sure to be at home, and we might get his opinion of Joanna. I know some of his witnesses, and could enter into the depths of his system with him. As for Joanna, though tolerably well versed in the history of human credulity, I have never seen anything so disgraceful to common sense as her precious publications. . . . .

"Metaphysicians have become less mischievous, but

a good deal more troublesome. There was some excuse for them when they believed their opinions necessary to salvation; and it was certainly better for plain people like you and I that they should write by the folio than talk by the hour. . . . . "God bless you!

R. S."

To Mrs. Southey.

"Norwich, April 12. 1806.

"My dear Edith,

. . . . . .

"My adventures here are such as you might guess, — a mere repetition of visits and dinners. . . . Yesterday a sumptuous dinner with Joseph Gurney. The two impossibilities for a stranger at Norwich are, to find his way about the city, and to know the names of the Gurneys. They talked about Clarkson, and seemed to fear his book would not sell as he expected it to do; not more than twenty subscribers having been procured among the Quakers there. . . . . To-morrow I sup at Newmarket on my way to London, and sleep in the coach; and there you have my whole history thus far.

"King Arthur has, I see, been playing his usual editorial tricks with me, and has lopt off a defence of Bruce against Pinkerton, because he did not like to have Mr. Pinkerton contradicted; and some remarks upon the infamous blunders of the printer, because he did not choose to insert anything that was not agree-

able to the bookseller. And yet Miss Lucy Aikin says her brother is by nature of an intrepid character, and alleges as a proof of his intrepidity, that he puts his name to the Annual Review!

"I have got a clue to the state of the Catholics here, of which some use may be made by D. Manuel. ——— is the head of the sect here, and loves to talk about them, and from him I have borrowed a sort of Catholic almanac, which explains their present state. I shall purchase one in London, and turn it to good account. He tells me the Jesuits exist in England as a separate body, and have even a chapel in Norwich; but how they exist, and whence their funds are derived, is a secret to himself. This is a highly curious fact, and to me, particularly, a very interesting one: I shall make further inquiry. St. Winifred has lately worked a miracle at her Well, and healed a paralytic woman. These Catholics want only a little more success to be just as impudent as they were three centuries ago.

"God bless you, my dear Edith!

R. S."

From Norwich my father went on to London, where, however, he remained only a very short time, and then returned home through Herefordshire, where he had some affairs to look after concerning his uncle Mr. Hills living in that county.

A letter to Mr. Bedford on his return, commences with one of those quaint fancies with which he delighted to amuse himself.

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Greta Hall, May 27. 1806.

"A discovery of the original language propounded to the consideration of the worshipful Master Bedford.

"There was in old times a King of Egypt, who did make a full politic experiment touching this question, as is discoursed of by sundry antique authors. Howbeit to me it seemeth that it falleth short of that clear and manifest truth, which should be the butt of our inquiry. Now, methinks, if it could be shown what is the very language which dame Nature, the common mother of all, hath implanted in animals whom we, foolishly misjudging, do term dumb, that were, indeed, a hit palpable and of notable import. To this effect I have noted what that silly bird, called of the Latins Anser, doth utter in time of affright; for it then thinketh of the water, inasmuch as in the water it findeth its safety; and while its thoughts be upon the water so greatly desired of it, it crieth *qua—a-qua —a-qua;* wherefore it is to be inferred that *aqua* is the very natural word for water, and the Latin, therefore, the *primitive, natural, and original tongue.*

"Etymology is of more value when applied to the elements of language, and it must be acknowledged that I have here hit upon an elementary word. One of those critics, I forget which, who thought proper to review Thalaba without taking the trouble to understand the story, noticed, as one of the absurdities of the book, that Thalaba was enabled to read some unintelligible letters on a ring, by others equally un-

intelligible upon the head of a locust,—an absurdity existing only in their own stupid and careless misconception, for the thing is clear enough. I remember giving myself credit for putting a very girlish sort of thing into Oneiza's mouth, when I made her call those locust's lines 'Nature's own language;' for I have heard unthinking people talk of a natural language; and you know the story of the woman with child by a Dutchman, who was afraid to swear the child to an Englishman, because the truth would be found out when the child came to speak Dutch.

"I beseech you to come to me this season: we shall see more of each other in one week when once housed together, than during a seven years' intercourse in London. And if you do not come this year, the opportunity may be gone for ever, and you will never see this country so well nor so cheerfully after I have left it. *If* he were here, would be the thought to damp enjoyment, you would come as a mere laker, and pay a guide for telling you what to admire. When I go abroad it will be to remain there for a considerable time, and you and I are now old enough to feel the proportion which a few years bear to the not very many that constitute the utmost length of life.

"This feeling is the stronger upon me just now, as in arranging my letters I have seen those of three men now all in their graves, each of whom produced no little effect upon my character and after life,—Allen, Lovell, and poor Edmund Seward,—whom I never remember without the deepest love and veneration. Come you to Keswick, Bedford, and make

sure of a few weeks' enjoyment while we are both alive.

"I wish you would get the Annual Reviews, because without them my opinions are very incomplete: my share there is very considerable, and you would see in many of the articles more of the tone and temper of my mind than you can otherwise get at.

. . . . . .

You must be my biographer if I go first. . . . . Documents you shall have in plenty, if, indeed, you need more than our correspondence already supplies. This is a subject on which we will talk some evening when the sun is going down, and has tuned us to it. If the harp of Memnon had played in the evening instead of at the sunrise, it would have been a sweet emblem of that state of mind to which I now refer, and which, indeed, I am at this minute enjoying. But it is supper time.

"God bless you, Grosvenor!"

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, June 17. 1806.

"Dear Grosvenor,

"There are two poets who must come into our series, and I do not remember their names in your list: Sir John Moore, of whom the only poem which I have ever seen should be given. It is addressed to a lady, he himself being in a consumption. If you do not remember it, Wynn will, and I think can help you to it, for it is very beautiful.

The other poor rhymer is poor old Botch Hayes, whom we are in duty bound not to forget, and of whom you may say what you will, only let it be in the best good humour; because poor Botch's heart was always in the right place, which certainly his wig was not. And you may say, that though his talent at producing commonplace English verses was not very convenient for his competitors at Cambridge for the Seatonian prize, that his talent of producing commonplace Latin ones was exceedingly so for his pupils at Westminster. I don't say that I would wish to plant a laurel upon old Hayes's grave; but I could find in my heart to plant a vine there (if it would grow), as a more appropriate tree, and to pour a brimming libation of its juice, if we had any reason to think that the spirit of the grape could reach the spirit of the man. Poor fellow! that phrase of 'being no one's enemy but his own,' is not admitted as a set-off on earth, but in the other world, Grosvenor!

"Our last month has been so unusually fine, that the farmers want rain. July will probably give them enough. September and October are the safest months to come down in; though, if you consider gooseberry-pie as partaking of the nature of the *summum bonum* (to speak modestly of it), about a fortnight hence will be the happiest time you can choose. If Tom and Harry should be with me in time for the feat, I have thoughts of challenging all England at a match at gooseberry-pie: barring Jack the Giganticide's leathern bag, we are sure of the victory. Thank God, Tom has escaped the yellow fever! and if ever he lives to be an admiral, Grosvenor,—as by God's blessing he may,—

he shall give you and me a good dinner on board the flag-ship. We shall be so much the older by that time, that I fear good fortune would make neither of us much the happier.

"I have been inserting occasional rhymes in Kehama, and have in this way altered and amended about six hundred lines. When what is already written shall be got through in this manner, I shall think the poem in a way of completion: indeed, it will most likely supply my ways and means for the next winter, instead of reviewing. Elmsley advised me to go on with it; and the truth is, that my own likings and dislikings to it have been so equally divided, that I stood in need of somebody's encouragement to settle the balance. It gains by rhyme, which is to passages of no inherent merit what rouge and candle-light are to ordinary faces. Merely ornamental parts, also, are aided by it, as foil sets off paste. But where there is either passion or power, the plainer and more straightforward the language can be made the better. Now, you will suppose that upon this system I am writing Kehama. My proceedings are not quite so systematical; but what with revising and re-revising over and over again, they will amount to something like it at last.

"God bless you.

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"July 5. 1806.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"I thought it so likely you would hear from Wynn the particulars concerning John Southey's will *, that I felt no inclination to repeat the story to you, which would not have been the case had the old man done as he ought to have done. Good part of his property, consisting of a newly purchased estate, is given to a very distant relative of his mother's family, and, of course, gone for ever. About 2000*l.* in legacies: the rest falls to his brother, as sole executor and residuary legatee. Neither my own name nor either of my brothers' is mentioned. Thomas Southey apprised me of this the day of the old man's death. With him I am on good terms,—that is, if we were in the same town, we should dine together, for the sake of relationship, about once a-month; and if any thing were to happen to me, of any kind of family importance, — such as the birth of a child,—I should write a letter to him, beginning 'Dear Uncle.' He invites me to the 'Cottage,' and I shall go there on my way to Lisbon. I think it likely that he will leave his property rather to Tom than to me, for the name's sake, but not likely that he will leave it out of the family. He is about three or four-and-fifty, a man of no education, nor indeed of any thing else. And so

* An uncle of my father's, a wealthy solicitor of Taunton. See vol. i. p. 6.

you have all that I can tell you about the matter, excepting that there's an end of it. Some people, they say, are born with silver spoons in their mouths, and others with wooden ladles. I will hope something for my daughter, upon the strength of this proverb, inasmuch as she has three silver cups; but, for myself, I am of the fraternity of the wooden ladle.

" . . . . Last night I began the Preface *— huzza! And now, Grosvenor, let me tell you what I have to do. I am writing, 1. The History of Portugal; 2. The Chronicle of the Cid; 3. The Curse of Kehama; 4. Espriella's Letters. Look you, all these *I am* writing. The second and third of these must get into the press, and out of it before this time twelvemonths, or else I shall be like the Civil List. By way of interlude comes in this Preface. Don't swear, and bid me do one thing at a time. I tell you I can't afford to do one thing at a time — no, nor two neither; and it is only by doing many things that I contrive to do so much: for I cannot work long together at any thing without hurting myself; and so I do every thing by heats; then, by the time I am tired of one, my inclination for another is come round.

"Dr. Southey is arrived here. He puts his degree in his pocket, summers here, and will winter in London, to attend at an hospital. About this, of course, I shall apply to Carlisle; and, if it should so

* To the "Specimens of English Poets."

happen that you do not see him here, shall give him a direction to you when he goes to London.

R. S."

The following lines, written immediately after hearing of the event mentioned in the commencement of this letter, and preserved accidentally by a friend to whom he had sent them, may be appropriately inserted here.

"So thou art gone at last, old John,
And hast left all from me:
God give thee rest among the blest,—
I lay no blame to thee.

"Nor marvel I, for though one blood
Through both our veins was flowing,
Full well I know, old man, no love
From thee to me was owing.

"Thou hadst no anxious hopes for me,
In the winning years of infancy,
No joy in my upgrowing;
And when from the world's beaten way
I turned 'mid rugged paths astray,
No fears where I was going.

"It touched thee not if envy's voice
Was busy with my name;
Nor did it make thy heart rejoice
To hear of my fair fame.

"Old man, thou liest upon thy bier,
And none for thee will shed a tear;
They'll give thee a stately funeral,
With coach and hearse, and plume and pall;
But they who follow will grieve no more
Than the mutes who pace with their staves before.
With a light heart and a cheerful face
Will they put mourning on,
And bespeak thee a marble monument,
And think nothing more of Old John.

"An enviable death is his,
Who, leaving none to deplore him,
Hath yet a joy in his passing hour,
Because all he loved have died before him.
The monk, too, hath a joyful end,
And well may welcome death like a friend,
When the crucifix close to his heart is press'd,
And he piously crosses his arms on his breast,
And the brethren stand round him and sing him to rest,
And tell him, as sure he believes, that anon,
Receiving his crown, he shall sit on his throne,
And sing in the choir of the blest.

"But a hopeless sorrow it strikes to the heart,
To think how men like thee depart.—
Unloving and joyless was thy life,
Unlamented was thine end;
And neither in this world nor the next
Hadst thou a single friend:
None to weep for thee on earth—
None to greet thee in heaven's hall;
Father and mother, sister and brother—
Thy heart had been shut to them all.

"Alas, old man, that this should be!
One brother had raised up seed to thee;
And hadst thou, in their hour of need,
Cherished that dead brother's seed,
Thrown wide thy doors, and called them in,
How happy thine old age had been!
Thou wert a barren tree, around whose trunk,
Needing support, our tendrils should have clung;
Then had thy sapless boughs
With buds of hope and genial fruit been hung;
Yea, with undying flowers,
And wreaths for ever young."

To Lieutenant Southey, H. M. S. Amelia.

"Monday, July 28. 1806.

"My dear Tom,

"For many days I have looked for a letter from you,—the three lines announcing your arrival in England being all which have yet reached me. Yes-

terday the Dr. and I returned home after a five days' absence, and I was disappointed at finding no tidings of you. We were two days at Lloyd's; and have had three days' mountaineering,—one on the way there, two on our return,—through the wildest parts of this wild country, many times wishing you had been with us. One day we lost our way upon the mountains, got upon a summit where there were precipices before us, and found a way down through a fissure, like three sides of a chimney, where we could reach from side to side, and help ourselves with our hands. This chimney-way was considerably higher than any house, and then we had an hour's descent afterwards over loose stones. Yesterday we mounted Great Gabel,—one of the highest mountains in the country,—and had a magnificent view of the Isle of Man, rising out of a sea of light, for the water lay like a sheet of silver. This was a digression from our straight road, and exceedingly fatiguing it was; however, after we got down we drank five quarts of milk between us, and got home as fresh as larks after a walk of eleven hours. You will find it harder service than walking the deck when you come here.

"Our landlord, who lives in the house adjoining us, has a boat, which is as much at our service as if it were our own;—of this we have voted you commander-in-chief whenever you shall arrive. The lake is about four miles in length, and something between one and two in breadth. However tired you may be of the salt water, I do not think you will have the same objection to fresh when you see this beautiful basin, clear as crystal, and shut in by mountains on

every side, except one opening to the N.W. We are very frequently upon it; Harry and I being both tolerably good boatmen; and sometimes we sit in state and the women row us—a way of manning a boat which will amuse you. The only family with which we are on familiar terms, live, during the summer and autumn, on a little island here—one of the loveliest spots in this wide world. They have one long room, looking on the lake from three windows, affording the most beautiful views; and in that room you may have as much music, dancing, shuttle-cocking, &c. as your heart can desire. They generally embargo us on our water expeditions. I know not whether you like dining under a tree, as well as with the conveniences of chairs and table and a roof over your head—which I confess please me better than a seat upon any moss however cushiony, and in any shade however romantic; if, however, you do, here are some delightful bays at the head of the lake, in any of which we may land; and if you love fishing, you may catch perch enough on the way for the boat's company, and perhaps a jack or two into the bargain.

"One main advantage which this country possesses over Wales is, that there are no long tracks of desolation to cross between one beautiful spot and another. We are sixteen miles only from Winandermere, and three other lakes are on the way to it. Sixteen only from Wastwater, as many from Ulswater, nine from Buttermere and Crummock. Lloyd expects you will give him a few days—a *few* they must be; for though I shall be with you, we will not spare you long from

home;—but his house stands delightfully, and puts a large part of the finest scenery within our reach. You will find him very friendly, and will like his wife much—she is a great favourite with me. The Bishop of Llandaff lives near them, to whom I have lately been introduced. God bless you!

R. S."

To Joseph Cottle, Esq.

"Keswick, Aug. 11. 1806.

"My dear Cottle,

"Madoc has not made my fortune. By the state of my account in May last,—that is, twelve months after its publication,—there was a balance due to me (on the plan of dividing the profits) of 3*l.* 19*s.* 1*d.* About 180 then remained to be sold, each of which will give me 5*s.*; but the sale will be rather slower than distillation through a filtering stone. We mean to print a small edition in two vols. without delay, and without alterations, that the quarto may not lose its value.

"Of the many *reviewings* of this poem I have only seen the Edinburgh, Monthly, and Annual. I sent a copy to Mr. Fox, and Lady Holland told me it was the rule at St. Ann's Hill to read aloud till eleven, and then retire; but that when they were reading Madoc they often read till the clock struck twelve. In short, I have had as much *praise* as heart could desire, but not quite so much of the more solid kind of remuneration. . . . . .

I am preparing for the press the Chronicle of the

Cid,—a very curious monument of old Spanish manners and history, which will make two little volumes, to the great delight of about as many readers as will suffice to take off an edition of 750.

"You suggest to me three Epic subjects, all of them striking, but each liable to the same objection,—that no entire and worthy interest can be attached to the conquering party in either. 1st. William of Normandy is less a hero than Harold. The true light in which that part of our history should be regarded was shown me by William Taylor. The country was not thoroughly converted. Harold favoured the Pagans, and the Normans were helped by the priests. 2dly. Alaric is the chief personage of a French poem by Scudery, which is notoriously worthless. The capture of Rome is in itself an event so striking that it almost palsies one's feelings; yet nothing resulted which could give a worthy purport to the poem. In this point Theodoric is a better hero: the indispensable requisite, however, in a subject for me is, that the end—the ultimate end—must be worthy of the means. 3dly. The expulsion of the Moriscoes. This is a dreadful history, which I will never torture myself by reading a second time. Besides I am convinced, in opposition to the common opinion, that the Spaniards did wisely in the act of expelling them; tho' most wickedly in the way of expelling them. One word more about literature, and then to other matters. How goes on the Fall of Cambria, and what are you about?

"My little girl is now two years and a quarter old —a delightful playfellow, of whom I am somewhat

more fond than is fitting. . . . . Edith is in excellent health: I myself the same barebones as ever, first cousin to an anatomy, but with my usual good health and steady good spirits; neither in habits nor in anything else different from what I was, except that if my *upper story* is not better furnished, a great deal of good furniture is thrown away.

" . . . . . .

In spite of the slow sale of Madoc, I cannot but think that it may answer as well for the year's ways and means to finish the 'Curse of Kehama,' and sell the first edition, as to spend the time in criticising other people's books. . . . .

" God bless you!

R. SOUTHEY."

To John Rickman, Esq.

" Oct. 13. 1806.

" My dear Rickman,

" You will be glad to hear that my child proves to be of the more worthy gender.

" I would do a great deal to please poor Tobin (indeed, it is doing a good deal to let him inflict an argument upon me), but to write an epilogue is doing too much for anybody. Indeed, were I ever so well disposed to misemploy time, paper, and rhymes, it would be as much out of my reach as the moon is; and I bless my stars for the incapacity, believing that a man who can do such things well cannot do anything better.

"I am also thoroughly busy. Summer is my holyday season, in which I lay in a store of exercise to serve me for the winter, and leave myself as it were lying fallow to the influences of heaven. I am now very hard at Palmerin,—so troublesome a business, that a look before the leap would have prevented the leap altogether. I expected it would only be needful to alter the *Propria quæ maribus* to their original orthography, and restore the costume where the old translators had omitted it, as being to them foreign or obsolete; but they have so mangled, mutilated, and massacred the manners,—vulgarised, impoverished, and embeggared the language,—so lopped, cropped, and docked the ornaments, that I was fain to set my shoulder stiffly to the wheel, and retranslate about the one-half. As this will not produce me one penny more than if I had reprinted it with all its imperfections on its head, the good conscience with which it is done reconciles me to the loss of time; and I have, moreover, such a true love of romance that the labour is not irksome, tho' it is hard. To correct a sheet,—sixteen pages of the square-sized black letter—is a day's work; that is, from breakfast till dinner, allowing an hour's walk, and from tea till supper; and the whole is about sixty sheets.

"Secondly, Espriella is regulated by the printer, who seems as little disposed to hurry me as I am to hurry him.

"Thirdly, the reviewing is come round, of which, in the shape of Missionaries, Catholic Miracles, Bible and Religious Societies, Clarkson, and little Moore (not forgetting Captain Burney), I have more to do

than I at first desired, yet not more than will make a reasonable item on the right side of the King of Persia's* books.

"Fourthly, I have done half the Cid, and, whenever I seem sufficiently ahead of other employment, to lie-to for awhile, this is what I go to.

"Lastly, for the Athenæum,—*alias* Foolæum, for I abominate such titles,—I am making some preparations, meaning, among other things, to print there certain collections of unemployed notes and memoranda, under the title of Omniana. . . . .
By God's blessing I shall have done all this by the end of the winter, and come to town early in the spring, to inspect certain books for the Cid at the Museum and at Holland House. God bless you!

R. S."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Dec. 23, 1808.

"My dear Rickman,

". . . . . .

I am left alone to my winter occupations, and truly they are quite sufficient to employ me. Two months, however, if no unlucky interruption prevent, will be sufficient to clear all off, and send Espriella and Palmerin into the world. I have an additional and weighty motive for despatch. The times being South American mad, my account of Brazil, instead

* Artaxerxes surnamed Longimanus—Longman.

of being the last work in the series, must be the first. There are in the book-case down stairs at your house sixteen bundles of sealed papers. Those papers contain more information respecting South America than His Majesty's agents have been able to obtain at Lisbon; more, in all probability, than any other person in Europe possesses except one Frenchman, now returned to Paris: he has seen them, and is very likely to get the start of me unless, which is not improbable, Bonaparte choose to withhold from the world information which would be of specific use to England.

"Concerning these papers, of whose contents I was till last week ignorant, my uncle has written to me, urging me to make all possible speed with this part of the book, and desiring me to offer the information to Government. I enclosed the letter to Wynn, and it may be he will advise me to come up to London upon this business. I hope not. I should rather wash my hands of all other business first, and then can certainly, in half a year, accomplish a large volume, for on this subject there is no collateral information to hunt for. A very few books contain all the printed history, and there will be more difficulty in planning the work than in executing it. There will be business of some consequence in the way of map-making, which will delight Arrowsmith. My uncle has very valuable materials for a map of Brazil.

"This is of so much consequence that it will perhaps be advisable to let the Palmerin sleep, and so have a month's time. . . . Wynn's letter will instruct

me whether to set to work for myself or for the Government; giving them information is, God knows, throwing pearls you know to whom, but, so the pearls be paid for, well. The best thing they could do for me and for them, if they really want information about South America, is to send me to Lisbon for that specific purpose, without any ostensible charge.

"There is nothing in the world like resolute, straightforward honesty; it is sure to conquer in the long run. I have been reading Quaker history, which is worth reading because it proves this, and proves also that institutions can completely new model our nature; for, if the instinct of self-defence be subdued, nothing else is so powerful.

"Fox's death is a loss to me, who had a promise from him, but I will not affect to think it a loss to the country: he lived a year too long. England cannot fall yet, blessed be God! because its inhabitants are Englishmen; but, if any thing could destroy a country, it would be the incurable folly of such governors.

"Have you seen the Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson? If not, by all means read it: it is the history of a right Englishman; and the sketch of English history which it contains from the time of the Reformation is so admirable, that it ought to make even Scotchmen ashamed to mention the name of Hume. I have seldom been so deeply interested by any book as this. . . . . .

R. S."

CHAPTER XIII.

HE UNDERTAKES TO EDIT "KIRKE WHITE'S REMAINS." — DETAILS OF HIS SETTLING AT GRETA HALL. — GRANT OF A SMALL PENSION. — OPINIONS ON THE CATHOLIC QUESTION. — PROGRESS OF "KIRKE WHITE'S REMAINS." — HEAVY DEDUCTIONS FROM HIS PENSION. — MODERN POETRY. — POLITICS. — PREDICTS SEVERE CRITICISMS ON THE "SPECIMENS OF ENGLISH POETRY." — RECOLLECTIONS OF COLLEGE FRIENDS. — REMARKS ON CLASSICAL READING. — THE CATHOLIC QUESTION. — SPANISH PAPERS WANTED. — MR. DUPPA'S "LIFE OF MICHAEL ANGELO." — MOTIVES FOR EDITING "KIRKE WHITE'S REMAINS." — BEST SEASON FOR VISITING THE LAKES. — EFFECT UPON THEM OF CLOUD AND SUNSHINE. — THEORY OF EDUCATING CHILDREN FOR SPECIFIC LITERARY PURPOSES. — PROBABLE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW EDINBURGH REVIEW. — PLAYFUL LETTER TO THE LATE HARTLEY COLERIDGE. — NEW EDITION OF DON QUIXOTE PROJECTED. — PLAN OF A CRITICAL CATALOGUE. — PALMERIN OF ENGLAND. — LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL. — CHRONICLE OF THE CID. — MORTE D'ARTHUR. — PECUNIARY DIFFICULTIES. — SALE OF ESPRIELLA'S LETTERS. — SPECIMENS OF ENGLISH POETRY. — OVERTURES MADE TO HIM TO TAKE PART IN THE EDINBURGH REVIEW. — REASONS FOR DECLINING TO DO SO. —1807.

AMIDST all my father's various and multiplied occupations, he was yet one of those of whom it might be truly said, that

> "they can make who fail to find
> Brief leisure even in busiest days,"

R.A.S.C.M. 1859 ASIATIC

for any kindly office; and needful as was all his time and all his labour to provide for the many calls upon him, he was never grudging of a portion of it to assist another. "Silver and gold" he had little to bestow, but "such as he had" he "gave freely."

We have already seen how materially he had assisted, in conjunction with his friend Mr. Cottle, in establishing the reputation of Chatterton, and in procuring for his needy relatives some profit from his writings; he now engaged himself in a task not dissimilar, except in the perfect and unalloyed satisfaction with which the whole character of the subject of it could be drawn out and contemplated.

In the spring of the year 1804 he had observed, in the Monthly Review, what he considered a most harsh and unjust reviewal of a small volume of poems by Henry Kirke White; and having also accidentally seen a letter which the author had written to the reviewers, explaining the peculiar circumstances under which these poems were written and published, he understood the whole cruelty of their injustice. In consequence of this, he wrote to Henry to encourage him; told him that, though he was well aware how imprudent it was in young poets to publish their productions, his circumstances seemed to render that expedient from which it would otherwise be right to dissuade him; advised him therefore, if he had no better prospects, to print a larger volume by subscription, and offered to do what little was in his power to serve him in the business.

This letter, which I regret has not been preserved, produced a reply full of expressions of gratitude,

both for the advice and offers of assistance it contained; but in consequence of Kirke White's going very soon afterwards to Cambridge, but little further communication took place; and his untimely and lamented death, in October 1806, caused by the severe and unrelenting course of study he pursued, acting upon a frame already debilitated by too great mental exertion, put an end to the hopes my father had cherished, both of enjoying his friendship, and of witnessing his fame.

On his decease, one of his friends wrote to my father, informing him of the event, as one who had professed an interest in his fortunes. This led to an inquiry what papers he had left behind him, to a correspondence with his brother Neville, and, ultimately, to the publication, under my father's editorship, of two volumes of his "Remains," accompanied with a brief Memoir of his Life.

To the preparation of these the three following letters refer; — others, relating to the same subject, as well as to more general matters, addressed to Kirke White's two brothers, with whom, especially the elder, the acquaintance thus begun ripened into an intimate and life-long friendship, will appear in their proper places.

To Mr. Neville White.

"Keswick, Dec. 20. 1806.

"Dear Sir,

"Your letter and parcel arrived yesterday, just as I had completed the examination of the former papers. I have now examined the whole.

"What account of your brother shall be given it rests with you, sir, and his other nearest friends, to determine. I advise and *entreat* that it may be as full and as minute as possible. The example of a young man winning his way against great difficulties, of such honourable ambition, such unexampled industry, such a righteous and holy confidence of genius, ought not to be withheld. A full and faithful narrative of his difficulties, his hopes, and his eventual success, till it pleased God to promote him to a higher state of existence, will be a lasting encouragement to others who have the same uphill path to tread;—he will be to them what Chatterton was to him, and he will be a purer and better example. If it would wound the feelings of his family to let all and every particular of his honourable and admirable life be known, those feelings are, of course, paramount to every other consideration. But I sincerely hope this may not be the case. It will, I know, be a painful task to furnish me with materials for this, which is the most useful kind of biography, yet, when the effort of beginning such a task shall have been accomplished, the consciousness that you are doing for him what he would have wished to be done, will bring with it a consolation and a comfort.

"Let me beg of you and of your family, when you can command heart for the task, to give me all your recollections of his childhood and of every stage of his life. Do not fear you can be too minute; I will arrange them, insert such poems as will best appear in that place, and add such remarks as grow out of the circumstances. The narrative itself cannot be

told too plainly; all ornament of style would be misplaced in it,—that which is meant to tickle the ear will never find its way either to the understanding or the heart.

"Respecting the mode of publication, you had better consult Mr. ——. The booksellers will, beyond a doubt, undertake to publish them on condition of halving the eventual profits,—which are the terms on which I publish. The profit, I fear, will not be much, unless the public should be taken with some unusual fit of good feeling; and, indeed, this is not unlikely, for they are more frequently just to the dead than to the living.

"I shall be glad to see all his magazine publications; possibly some of the pieces marked by me for transcription may be found among them. There is one poem, printed in the Globe for Feb. 11. 1803, which I remember noticing when it appeared, and which may be more easily copied from the newspaper than from the manuscript. Whether any of his prose writings should be inserted, I shall better be able to judge after having seen the magazines. But the most valuable materials which could be entrusted to me would be his letters,—the more that could be said of him in his own words the better.

"I have been affected at seeing my own name among your brother's papers;—there is a defence of Thalaba, a part of which I regard as the most discriminating and appropriate praise which I have received.* It seems to have been published in some

* It may not be uninteresting to the reader to see here that portion of Kirke White's remarks on Thalaba which is thus refered to After

magazine. These are the highest gratifications which a writer can receive; — for that class of readers who call themselves the public I have as little respect as need be; but to interest and influence such a mind as Henry White's is the best and worthiest object which any poet could propose to himself — the fulfilment of his dearest hopes.

Yours truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

saying that "an innovation so bold as that of Mr. Southey is sure to meet with disapprobation and ridicule," he continues — "Whoever is conversant with the writings of this author, will have observed and admired that greatness of mind and comprehension of intellect, by which he is enabled, on all occasions, to throw off the shackles of habit and prepossession. Southey never treads in the beaten track: his thoughts, while they are those of nature, carry that cast of originality which is the stamp and testimony of genius. He views things through a peculiar phasis; and while he has the feelings of a man, they are those of a man almost abstracted from mortality, and reflecting on and painting the scenes of life, as if he were a mere spectator, uninfluenced by his own connection with the objects he surveys. To this faculty of bold discrimination I attribute many of Mr. Southey's excellencies as a poet. He never seems to inquire how other men would treat a subject, or what may happen to be the usage of the times; but, filled with that strong sense of fitness, which is the result of bold and unshackled thought, he fearlessly pursues that course which his own sense of propriety points out.

"..... At first, indeed, the verse may appear uncouth, because it is new to the ear; but I defy any man, who has any feeling of melody, to peruse the whole poem without paying tribute to the sweetness of its flow, and the gracefulness of its modulation.

"In judging of this extraordinary poem, we should consider it as a genuine lyric production — we should conceive it as recited to the harp, in times when such relations carried nothing incredible with them. Carrying this idea along with us, the admirable art of the poet will strike us with tenfold conviction; the abrupt sublimity of his transitions, the sublime simplicity of his manner, and the delicate touches by which he connects the various parts of his narrative, will then be more strongly observable; and we shall, in particular, remark the uncommon felicity with which he has adapted his versification, and, in the midst of the wildest irregularity, left nothing to shock the ear or offend the judgment." — *Remains*, vol. ii. pp. 285, 286.

To Mr. Neville White.

"Keswick, Feb. 3. 1807.

"Dear Sir,

" . . . . It will be well to print the Melancholy Hours, and some other of the prose compositions. They mark the character, as well as the powers, of your brother's mind, and should, therefore, be preserved. The No. 10. which you mention is, I believe, that criticism upon Thalaba the Destroyer, of which I spoke in a former letter. I may be permitted to expunge from it, or to soften, a few epithets, of which it gratifies me that your brother should have thought me worthy, but which it is not decent that I should edit myself. . . . Believe me, sir, if I were not now proving the high respect which I feel for your brother, it would give me pain to think what value he assigned to the mere expression of it. How deeply I regret that the little intercourse we ever had should have ended where it did; it is needless now to say. I should have begged him to have visited me here, but for this reason: when he told me he was going to Cambridge, there were some circumstances which made me believe he was under the patronage of Mr. Henry Thornton, or of some other persons of similar views; that his opinions had taken what is called an evangelical turn, and that he was designed for that particular ministry. My own religious opinions are not less zealous and not less sincere, but they are totally opposite. I would not run the risk of disturbing his

sentiments, and therefore delayed forming that personal friendship with him, to which I looked on with pleasure, till his mind should have outgrown opinions through which it was well that it should pass.

"In reading and re-reading the poem, I have filled up a few of the gaps with conjectural words of correction, which shall be printed in italics, and to which, therefore, there can be no objection. The more I read them, the more is my admiration; they are as it should be—of very various merit, and show the whole progress of his mind. Many of them are excellently good — so good that it is impossible they could be better, and all together certainly exceed the productions of any other young poet whatsoever. I do not except Chatterton from the number; and I have a full confidence that, sooner or later, the public opinion will confirm mine. Perhaps this may be immediately acknowledged.

"I am greatly in hopes that many of his letters may be fit for publication. Till these arrive, it is not possible to judge to what extent the proposed introductory account (in which they would probably be inserted, or after it) will run; but as soon as this is ascertained, the volumes may be divided and the second go to press. Will you have the goodness to copy for me that abominable criticism in the Monthly Review upon Clifton Grove, and also the notice they took of your brother's letter. That criticism must be inserted; and if you remember any other reviewal in which he was treated with illiberality, I shall be glad to hold up such criticism to the infamy which it deserves.

"It will give me great pleasure if a likeness can be recovered — very great pleasure. Your brother Henry, sir, is not to be lamented. He has gained that earthly immortality for which he laboured, and that heavenly immortality of which he was worthy. I say this with tears, but they are tears of admiration as well as of human regret. If you knew me, sir, and how little prone I am to let such feelings as these appear upon the surface, you would understand these words in their literal sense, and in their full meaning.

Yours very truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Mr. Neville White.

"March 3. 1807.

"My dear Sir,

"Your parcel reached me on Sunday evening, and I have perused every line of its contents with deep and painful interest. The letters, and your account (of which I should say much were I writing to any other person), have made me thoroughly acquainted with one of the most amiable and most admirable human beings that ever was ripened upon earth for heaven. Be assured that I will not insert a sentence which can give pain or offence to any one. There will come a time (and God only knows how soon it may come) when some one will perform that office for me, which I am now performing for your incomparable brother; and I shall endeavour to show how that office ought to be performed. I will be scrupulously careful; and if, when the papers pass through

your hands, you should think I have not been sufficiently so, I beg you will, without hesitation, expunge whatever may appear exceptionable.

. . . . . .

When I obeyed the impulse which led me to undertake this task, it was from a knowledge that Henry White had left behind him an example, which ought not to be lost, of well-directed talents, and that, in performing an act of respect to his memory, I should at the same time hold up the example to others who have the up-hill paths of life to tread. No person can be more thoroughly convinced that goodness is a better thing than genius, and that genius is no excuse for those follies and offences which are called its eccentricities.

"The mention made in my last of any difference in religious opinions from your brother was merely incidental; nor is it by any means my intention to say any more upon the subject than simply to state that those opinions are not mine, lest it should be supposed they were, from the manner in which I speak of him.

"I shall now proceed as speedily as I can with the work.

Yours truly, and with much esteem,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Richard Duppa, Esq.

"March 27. 1807.

"Dear Duppa,

"The Ministry — by this time, perhaps, no longer a Ministry — have made a very pretty kettle of fish of it; which phrase, by the by, would look well in literal translation into any other language. Perhaps you will be surprised to hear that on the Catholic Question I am as stiffly against them as his Majesty himself. Of all my friends Coleridge is perhaps the only one who thinks with me upon this subject; but I am clear in my own mind. I am, however, sorry for the business, — more to think what a rabble must come in, than for any respect for those who are going out — though the *Limited Service* and the Abolishment of the Slave Trade are great things. As for any effect upon my own possible fortunes, you need not be told how little any such *possibilities* ever enter into my feelings: they have entered into my calculations just enough to keep me unsettled, and nothing more. And here I am now planting garden-enclosures, rose-bushes, currants, gooseberries, and resolute to become a mountaineer — perhaps for ever — unless I should remove for final settlement at Lisbon. My study is to be finished — my books gathered together; and if you do not come down again, the very first summer you are not otherwise engaged, why — you may stay and be smoke-dried in London for your good-for-nothingness. I have a man called Willy, who is my Juniper in this business.

We are going to have laburnums and *lilacs*, seringas, barberry bushes, and a pear-tree to grow up by your window against the wall, and *white* curtains in my library, and to dye the old ones in the parlour blue, and to put fringe to them, Mr. Duppa, and to paper the room, Mr. Duppa, and I am to have a carpet in my study, Mr. Duppa, and the chairs are to be new bottomed, and we are to buy some fenders at the sale of the General's things, and we have bought a new hearth-rug. And then the outside of the house is to be rough-cast, as soon as the season will permit, and there is a border made under the windows, and there is to be a gravel walk there, and turf under the trees beyond *that*, and beyond *that* such peas and beans! Oh! Mr. Duppa, how you will like them when you come down, and how fine we shall be, if all this does not ruin me!

"The reason of all this is, that some arrangements of Coleridge's made it necessary that I should either resolve upon removing speedily, or remaining in the house. The one I could not do, and was, not unwillingly, forced to the other. Indeed, the sense of being unsettled was the only uneasiness I had; and these little arrangements for future comfort give me, I am sure, more solid satisfaction and true enjoyment than his great Howickship can possibly have felt upon getting into that Downing Street, from whence he will so reluctantly get out,—like a dog on a wet day out of the kitchen, growling as he goes, with his tail between his legs, and showing the teeth with which he dares not bite. Jackson—God

bless him--is as well pleased about it as I am; and that excellent good woman, Mrs. Wilson, is rejoiced at heart to think that we are likely to remain here for the remainder of her days.

"Sir, it would surprise you to see how I dig in the garden. I am going to buy the 'Complete Gardener;' and we do hope to attain one day to the luxuries of currant wine, and such like things, which I hope will meet your approbation, after you and I have been up Causey Pike again, and over the Fells to Blea Tarn, — expeditions to the repetition of which I know you look on with great pleasure.

"I shall miss Harry this summer, — an excellent boatman, and a companion whose good spirits and good humour never failed. If T. Grenville would make Tom a Captain, and send him down to grass for the summer, he would do a better thing than he has done yet since he went to the Admiralty. Wynn did mention my brother to him; but we had no borough interest to back us, and fourteen years' hard service go for nothing, with wounds, blowing up, honourable mention, and excellent good conduct. Still I have a sort of faith (God willing) that he will be an Admiral yet.

"I am hurrying my printer with Espriella, for fear another translation should appear before mine, which, you know, would be very unlucky. Ten sheets of the second volume are done. I much wish it were out, having better hopes of its sale than the fate of better books will perhaps warrant. But this-

is a good book in its way, and its way ought to be, in book-selling phrase, a taking one.

"God bless you!

R. S."

At the commencement of the preceding letter, my father alludes to the tottering condition of the Grenville Ministry, of which his friend Mr. Wynn was a member, who had been for some time looking out for an opportunity of serving him; and, under the impression that their resignation had taken place, without any having occurred, he now writes:—"When you have it in your power again, let the one thing you seek for me be the office of Historiographer, with a decent pension. If 300*l.*, it would satisfy my wishes—if 400*l.*, I should be rich. I have no worldly ambition: a man who lives so much in the past and the future can have none. . . . . When you are in, do not form higher wishes for me than I have for myself. I *am* in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call me, *for* which I am formed, *in* which I am contented; nor is it likely that I could be in any other so usefully, so worthily, or so happily employed. If what I now receive shall in the future come from the Treasury, I shall not then have any serious wish for any change of fortune; nor would this be one, if you were wealthier. What more is necessary I get—hardly enough, it is true, but still in my own way; and it is not impossible but that some day or other one of my books should, by some accident, hit the fashion of the day, and, by a rapid sale, place me in comparative affluence. I

must be a second time cut off if I do not still inherit an independence; and if, after all, I should go out of the world as poor a man as I am at this present—the moment it comes to be 'poor Southey,' my name becomes a provision for my wife and children, even though I had not that reliance upon individual friendship which experience makes me feel."

The next letter shows that his friend had succeeded in obtaining for him a small pension, which, though it really diminished his income instead of increasing it, was very acceptable, for the reasons he here states.

To John May, Esq.

"Keswick, March 30. 1807.

"My dear Friend,

"I am just now enabled to give you some intelligence concerning myself. In this topsey-turveying of ministers, Wynn was very anxious, as he says, 'to pick something out of the fire for me.' The registership of the Vice-Admiralty Court in St. Lucia was offered, worth about 600*l.* a-year. He wrote to me, offering this, or, as an alternative, the only one in his power, a pension of 200*l.*; but, before my answer could arrive, it was necessary that he should choose for me, and he judged rightly in taking the latter. Fees and taxes will reduce this to 160*l.* †, the precise sum for which I have hitherto been indebted to him; so that I remain with just the same income as before. The different source

* March 27. 1807.

† The deduction proved to be 56*l.* reducing it to 144*l.*

from which it is derived is, as you may suppose, sufficiently grateful; for though Wynn could till now well afford this, and I had no reluctance in accepting it from one who is the oldest friend I have in the world (we have been intimate for nineteen years), he has now nearly doubled his expenditure by marrying . . . . . This, I suppose, is asked for and granted to me as a man of letters, in which character I feel myself fully and fairly entitled to receive it; and you know me too well to suppose that it can make me lose one jot of that freedom, both of opinion and speech, without which I should think myself unworthy, not of this poor earthly pittance alone, but of God's air and sunshine, and my inheritance in heaven.

"I sent you the Specimens, and shall have to send you, owing to some omissions of Bedford's, a supplementary volume hereafter, which will complete its bibliographical value. Of its other merits and defects, hereafter. It will not be long before, I trust, you will receive Espriella: the printer promises to quicken his pace, and I hurry him, anticipating that this book will give you and my other friends some amusement, and deserve approbation on higher grounds. Thank you for all your kindness to Harry . . . . . This change of ministry — I am as hostile to the measure which was the pretext for it as the King himself; but, having conceded that measure, the King's conduct is equally exceptionable. Neither the country nor the Commons called for the change, and they were getting credit, and deserving it, by the 'Arms Bill,' the blessed 'Aboli-

tion of the Slave Trade,' the projected reforms, and the projected plan for educating the poor. And now their places are to be filled by a set of men of tried and convicted incapacity, with an old woman at their head! But I must refer you to my friend, Don Manuel Alvarez, for the reason why there is *always* a lack of talents in the English Government.

"God bless you!

Yours in haste,

R. S."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq.

"April, 1807.

"My dear Wynn,

"And so I am a Court Pensioner! It is well that I have not to kiss hands upon the occasion—or, upon my soul, I do not think I could help laughing at the changes and chances of this world! O dear, dear Wynn, when you and I used to hold debates with poor Bunbury over a pot of porter, how easily could your way of life have been predicted! And how would his and mine have mocked all foresight! And yet mine has been a straight-onward path! Nothing more has taken place *in* me than the ordinary process of beer or wine—of fermenting—and settling—and ripening!

"If Snowdon will come to Skiddaw in the summer, Skiddaw will go to Snowdon at the fall of the leaf. I shall work hard to get the Cid ready for publication, and must go with it to London. In that case my intention is to go first to Bristol,

and perhaps to Taunton, and Wales will not be out of my way. But I wish to show you those parts of the country which you have not seen, and which I have since you were here; and, to introduce you to the top of Skiddaw, which is an easy morning's walk.

"The mystery of this wonderful history of the change in administration is certainly explained; but who are the King's advisers? Are they his sons — or old Lord Liverpool? Mr. Simeon's wise remark, that 'the new Ministry was better than no Ministry at all,' put me in mind of a story which might well have been quoted in reply. One of the German Electors, when an Englishman was introduced to him, thought the best thing he could say to him, was to remark that 'it was bad weather;' upon which the Englishman shrugged up his shoulders and replied, 'yes — but it was *better than none!*' Would not this have *told* in the House? You do not shake my opinion concerning the Catholics. Their religion regards no national distinctions — it teaches them to look at Christendom and at the Pope as the head thereof — and the interests of that religion will always be preferred to anything else. Bonaparte is aware of this, and is aiming to be the head of the Catholic party in Germany.

"These people have been increasing in England of late years, owing to the number of seminaries established during the French Revolution. It is worth your while to get their Almanac, — the 'Lay Directory' it is called, and published by Brown and Keating, Duke Street, Grosvenor Square. They

are at their old tricks of miracles here and every where else. St. Winifred has lately worked a great one, and is in as high odour as ever she was.

"I am for abolishing the test with regard to every other sect—Jews and all—but not to the Catholics. They *will not tolerate:* the proof is in their whole history—in their whole system—and in their present practice all over Catholic Europe: and it is the nature of their principles *now* to spread in this country; Methodism, and the still wilder sects preparing the way for it. You have no conception of the zeal with which they seek for proselytes, nor the power they have over weak minds; for their system is as well the greatest work of human wisdom as it is of human wickedness. It is curious that the Jesuits exist in England as a body, and have possessions here; a Catholic told me this, and pointed out one in the streets of Norwich, but he could tell me nothing more, and expressed his surprise at it, and his curiosity to learn more. Having been abolished by the Pope, they keep up their order secretly, and expect their restoration, which, if he be wise, Bonaparte will effect. Were I a Catholic, that should be the object to which my life should be devoted—I would be the second Loyola.

"Concessions and conciliations will not satisfy the Catholics; vengeance and the throne are what they want. If Ireland were far enough from our shores to be lost without danger to our own security, I would say establish the Catholic religion there, as the easiest way of civilising it; but Catholic Ireland would always be at the command of the Pope, and

the Pope is now at the command of France. It is dismal to think of the state of Ireland. Nothing can redeem that country but such measures as none of our statesmen, except perhaps Marquis Wellesley, would be hardy enough to adopt,—nothing but a system of Roman conquest and colonization, and shipping off the refractory to the colonies.

"England condescends too much to the Catholic religion, and does not hold up her own to sufficient respect in her foreign possessions; and the Catholics, instead of feeling this as an act of indulgence to their opinions, interpret it as an acknowledgment of their superior claims, and insult us in consequence. This is the case at Malta. In India the want of an established church is a crying evil. Nothing but missionaries can secure in that country what we have won. The converts would immediately become English in their feelings, for, like Mahomet, we ought to make our language go with our religion,—a better policy this than that of introducing pig-tails, after our own home-plan of princely reform, for which ——, with all due respect to him, or whoever else was the agent in this inconceivable act of folly, ought to be gibbeted upon the top of the highest pagoda in Hindostan. God bless you!

R. S."

To Mr. Neville White.

"April 7. 1807.

"My dear Sir,

"\. . . . . .

The preliminary account is nearly finished. I have inserted in it such poems as seem best suited to that place, because they refer to Henry's then state of mind, and thus derive an interest from the narrative, and in their turn give it also. After the introduction I purpose to insert a selection of his letters, or rather of extracts from them, in chronological order. Upon mature consideration, and upon trial as well, I believe this to be better than inserting them in the account of his life. If the reader feel for Henry that love and admiration which I have endeavoured to make him feel, he will be prepared to receive these epistolary fragments as the most authentic and most valuable species of biography; and if he does not feel that love, it is no matter how he receives them, for his heart will be in fault, and his understanding necessarily darkened.

"I have, to the best of my judgment, omitted every thing of which the publication could occasion even the slightest unpleasant feeling to any person whatever; and if any thing of this kind has escaped me, you will, of course, consider your own opinion as decisive, and omit it accordingly, without any regard to mine. Assuredly we will not offend the feelings of any one; but there are many passages which, though they can give no pain to an individual, you

perhaps may think will not interest the public. If this fear come across you, take up Chatterton's letters to his mother and sister, and see if the very passages which will excite in you the greatest interest are not of the individual and individualising character, and then remember that Henry's is to be a name equally dear to the generation which will come after us.

. . . . . .

"My heart has often ached during this employment.

Yours very truly and respectfully,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

One extract from a letter written to Mr. Neville White at the close of the year I will place here, as it speaks of the completion of my father's grateful office.

"The sight of the books now completed gave me a melancholy feeling, and I could not help repeating some lines of Wordsworth's,—

"'Thou soul of God's best earthly mould,
Thou happy soul, and can it be
That this . . . .
Is all that must remain of thee?'

But this is not all: so many days and nights of unrelenting study, so many hopes and fears, so many aspirations after fame, so much genius, and so many virtues, have left behind them more than this,—they have left comfort and consolation to his friends, an honourable remembrance for himself, and for others, a bright and encouraging example.

"Our intercourse will not be at an end. When I visit London, which will certainly be during the winter, and probably very soon, I shall see you. We shall have, it is to be hoped and expected, to communicate respecting after editions; and at all times it will give me great pleasure to hear from you."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"April 21. 1807.

"Whether, Grosvenor, you will ascribe it to the cut of my nose, I cannot tell; nor whether it be a proof of the natural wickedness of the heart, but so it is, that I am less disposed to be very much obliged to the Treasury for giving me 200*l.* a year, than I am to swear at the Taxes for having the impudence to take 56*l.* of it back again. And if it were a pull Devil pull Baker between that loyalty which, as you know, has always been so predominant in my heart, and that jacobinism of which, you know how vilely, I have been suspected, I am afraid the 56 would give a stronger pull on the Baker's side than the 144 on the Devil's. Look you, Mr. Bedford of the Exchequer, it is out of all conscience. Ten in the hundred has always in all Christian states been thought damnable usury; and to say that a man took ten in the hundred was the same as saying that he would go to the Devil.* But this is eight-and-twenty in the

* So says the epigram attributed to Shakspeare, upon his friend Mr. Combe, an old gentleman noted for his wealth and usury:—

hundred, for which may eight-and-twenty hundred Devils . . . . . I am a little surprised to hear you speak so contemptuously of modern poetry, because it shows how very little you must have read, or how little you can have considered the subject. The improvement during the present reign has been to the full as great in poetry as it has been in the experimental sciences, or in the art of raising money by taxation. What can you have been thinking of? Had you forgotten Burns a second time? had you forgotten Cowper, Bowles, Montgomery, Joanna Baillie, Walter Scott? to omit a host of names which, though inferior to them, are above those of any former period except the age of Shakspeare, and not to mention Wordsworth and another poet, who has written two very pretty poems in my opinion, called Thalaba and Madoc. . . . . I am as busy in my household arrangements as you can be. My tent is pitched at last, and I am thankful that my lot has fallen in so goodly a land.

"Politics are very amusing, and go to the tune of *Tantara-rara.* The king has been fighting for a *veto* upon the initiation of laws, and he has won it. I had got into good humour with the late ministry because of the Limited Service Bill, the Abolishment

"Ten in the hundred lies here ingraved;
'Tis a hundred to ten his soul is not saved.
If any man ask, 'Who lies in this tomb?'
'Oh! oh!' quoth the Devil, ''tis my John-a-Combe.'"

It must be added that Mr. Knight strenuously opposes the tradition that Shakspeare wrote these lines.—*Knight's Shakspeare, a Biography,* p. 488.

of the Slave Trade, and their wise conduct with regard to the Continent. As for their successors, they have given a pretty sample of their contempt for all decency by their reinstatement of Lord Melville, the attempt at giving Percival the place for life, and the threat held out by Canning of a dissolution. The Grenvilles now find the error of their neglecting Scotland at the last election, an error which I heard noticed with regret at the time. What is it has made them so unpopular in the city? It is to me incomprehensible why the memory of Pitt should be held in such idolatrous reverence,—a man who was as obstinate in every thing wrong as he was ready to give up any thing good, and who, except in the Union and in the Scarcity, was never by any accident right during his long administration.

"I finish poor Henry White's papers to-morrow. One volume of Palmerin still remains to do, and then there will be nothing to impede my progress in S. America. Our Fathers wrote to me about the same time that you did; they were then in pursuit of the culprits Hinchcliffe and Gildon. I'll tell you what I would have done had I been in town and could not have found them. I would have made them a present of verses of my own, just enough in number to fill the gap, and dull enough to suit them. Nobody would have suspected it, and it would have been a very pious fraud to save trouble.

"It consoles me a little when I think of the reviewing* that is to take place: how much more you

* Of the Specimens of English Poets.

will feel it than I shall. I am case-hardened—but you—oh, Mr. Bedford, how your back and shoulders *will* tingle! how you *will* perspire! how you *will* bite your nails and gnash your teeth! how you *will* curse the reviewers, and the printers, and the poor poets, with now and then a remembrance of me and yourself. Why, man, there never was so bad a book before! If I were to take any twenty pages and enumerate all the faults in them,—do you remember Duppa, when he came from the Installation at Oxford, all piping hot? even to that degree of heat would the bare enumeration excite you, and your shirt would be as wet as if you had tumbled into a bath. I tell you my opinion as a friend just to prepare you for what is to come, and am actually laughing at the conceit of how you will look when you take up the first review! Farewell!

R. S."

To the Rev. Nicholas Lightfoot.

"Keswick, April 24. 1807.

" My dear Lightfoot,

" Circumstances have prevented me going to Portugal so soon as I intended. I am, however, likely (God willing, I may say certain, as far as human intentions can be so) to procure a whole holiday for your boys in the month of November next. Business will then lead me to London, and when I am so far south I have calls into the west, having an uncle and aunt near Taunton. The Barnstaple coach will carry me

to Tiverton; and for the rest of the way I have shoulders to carry a very commodious knapsack, and feet to carry myself,—being a better walker than when we were at Oxford.

"Your last letter is fourteen months old, and they may have brought forth so many changes, that I almost fear to ask for my god-child Fanny. During that time I have had a son born into the world, and baptized into the Church by the name of Herbert, who is now six months old, and bids fair to be as noisy a fellow as his father,—which is saying something; for be it known, that I am quite as noisy as ever I was, and should take as much delight as ever in showering stones through the hole of the staircase against your room door, and hearing with what hearty good earnest 'you fool!' was vociferated in indignation against me in return. O, dear Lightfoot, what a blessing it is to have a boy's heart! it is as great a blessing in carrying one through this world, as to have a child's spirit will be in fitting us for the next.

"If you are in the way of seeing reviews and magazines, they will have told you some of my occupations; the main one they cannot tell you, for they do not know it, nor is it my intention that they shall yet awhile. I am preparing that branch of the History of Portugal for publication first, which would have been last in order, had not temporary circumstances given it a peculiar interest and utility,—that which relates to Brazil and Paraguay. The manuscript documents in my possession are very numerous, and of the utmost importance, having been

collected with unwearied care by my uncle, during a residence of above thirty years in Portugal.

"Burnett is about to make his appearance in the world of authors with, I trust, some credit to himself. When we meet I will tell you the whole course of his eventful history,—for more eventful it has been than any one could have prognosticated on his entrance at old Balliol.

"Elmsley, I am sorry to say, is fatter than ever he was: he is one of my most intimate and most valuable friends. I hear from Duppa, or of him, frequently. His visit to Oxford at the Installation has been the occasion of throwing him quite into the circle of my friends in London. I sometimes think with wonder how few acquaintances I made at Oxford; except yourself and Burnett, not one whom I should feel any real pleasure in meeting. Of all the months in my life (happily they did not amount to years) those which were passed at Oxford were the most unprofitable. What Greek I took there I literally left there, and could not help losing; and all I learnt was a little swimming (very little the worse luck) and a little boating, which is greatly improved, now that I have a boat of my own upon this delightful lake. I never remember to have dreamt of Oxford,—a sure proof how little it entered into my moral being;—of school, on the contrary, I dream perpetually.

"C—— is become a great disciplinarian. Some friend of Dr. Aikin's dined one day at Balliol, and I was made the subject of conversation in the common room; poor C—— was my only friend: I be-

lieve he allowed that I must be damned for all my heresies, that was certain, but that it was a pity;—he remembered me with a degree of affection which neither a dozen years, nor that heart-deadening and uncharitable atmosphere had effaced. I should be glad to shake hands with him again. . . . . Let me hear from you, and believe me,

Yours very truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, May 5. 1807.

"My dear Grosvenor.

"When I wished you never to read the Classics again it was because, like many other persons, *you read nothing else*, and were not likely ever to get more knowledge out of them than you had got already, especially as you chiefly (I may say exclusively) read those from whom least is to be got, which is also another sin of the age. Your letter contains the usual blunders which the ignorance of the age is continually making, and upon which, and nothing else, rests the whole point at issue between such critics as Jeffrey and myself: you couple Homer and Virgil under the general term of classics, and suppose that both are to be admired upon the same grounds. A century ago this was better understood; the critics of that age did read what they wrote about, and understood what they read, and they knew that whoever thought the one of these

writers a good poet must upon that very principle hold the other to be a bad one. Greek and Latin poets, Grosvenor, are as opposite as French and English (excepting always Lucretius and Catullus), and you may as well suppose it possible for a man equally to admire Shakspeare and Racine as Homer and Virgil; that is, provided he knows why and wherefore he admires either. Elmsley will tell you this, and I suppose you will admit him to be authority upon this subject.

"You ask me about the Catholic question. I am against admitting them to power of any kind, because the immediate use that would be made of it would be to make proselytes, for which Catholicism is of all religions best adapted. Every ship which had a Catholic captain would have a Catholic chaplain, and in no very long time a Catholic crew: so on in the army; just as every rich Catholic in England at this time has his mansion surrounded with converts fairly purchased,—the Jerningham family in Norfolk for instance. I object to any concessions, because no concession can possibly satisfy them; and I think it palpable folly to talk or think of tolerating any sect (beyond what they already enjoy) whose first principle is that their church is infallible, and, therefore, bound to persecute all others. This is the principle of Catholicism everywhere, and when they can they avow it and act upon it."

"If our statesmen (God forgive me for degrading the word), — if our traders in politics, — had better information of how things are going on abroad, they would not talk of the distinction between Catholic

and Protestant as political parties being extinct. But for that distinction Prussia could not have retained its conquests from Austria; and that distinction Bonaparte is at this time endeavouring to profit by. There is a regular conspiracy, — a system carrying on to propagate popery in the North of Germany, of which Coleridge could communicate much if he would, he knowing the main directors of the new propaganda at Rome. The mode of doing it is curious, — they bring the people first to believe in Jacob Behmen, and then they may believe in anything else. All fanaticism tends to this point. You will hear something that bears upon this subject from Espriella when he makes his appearance; and you will also see more of the present history of enthusiasm in this country than any body could possibly suspect who has not, as I have done, cast a searching eye into the holes and corners of society, and watched its under currents, which carry more water than the upper stream.

"I have a favour to ask of Horace, — which is, that he will do me the kindness to send me the titles of such Portuguese manuscripts as are in the Museum. There cannot be so many as to make this a thing of much trouble; and there are some of great value, which were, I believe, part of the plunder of Osorio's library carried off from Sylvas by Sir F. Drake. I wish to know what they are, for the purpose of ascertaining how many among them are not to be found in their own country, and either taking myself, or causing to be taken, if a fit transcriber can be found, copies to present to some fit library at Lisbon:

in so doing I shall render the literature of that country a most acceptable service, which it would most highly gratify me to do, and for which I should receive very essential services in return. There are, I believe, in particular, some papers of Geronimo Lobos concerning Abyssinia, and a MS. of which Vincent has made some use. I am particularly desirous of effecting this, not merely because I could do nothing which would be more essentially useful to my own views there, but also because of the true and zealous love which I feel for Portuguese literature, in which I am now as well versed as in that of my own country, and into which (whenever the reign of priestcraft is at an end) I hope to be one day adopted.

"I pray you remember that what I think upon the Catholic question by no means disposes me in favour of the new ministry. I, Mr. Bedford, am, as you know, a court pensioner, and have, as you well know, deserved to be so for my great and devoted attachment to the person of His Majesty and the measures of his government. Nevertheless, Mr. Bedford, his ministers are men of tried and convicted incapacity; they have *always* been the contempt of Europe; whether they can be more despised than their predecessors have uniformly and deservedly been, I know not. I cannot tell how far below nothing the political barometer can sink till it has been tried.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Richard Duppa, Esq.

"May 23. 1807.

"My dear Duppa,

"Your book and your letter reached me at the same time. I have cut the leaves, collated the prints, and observe many valuable additions and some great typographical improvements. It was accompanied by a note from Mr. Murray of a very complimentary kind. I like to be complimented in my authorial character, and best of all by booksellers, because their good opinion gets purchasers, and so praise leads to pudding, which I consider to be the solid end of praise.

"I have Walter Scott's promise to do what he can for M. Angelo in the Edinburgh, with this sort of salvo,—that Jeffrey is not a very practicable man, but he would do his best with him. My acquaintance with Scott is merely an *acquaintance;* but I had occasion *once* to write to him respecting the sale of a MS. entrusted to me, and bought by him for the Advocate's Library, and in that letter I introduced the subject. I was greatly in hopes, and indeed expected, that Wordsworth would have done as much in the Critical, by means of his brother, who writes there. Had it not been for this, I might perhaps have done something by applying to Fellowes, the Anti-Calvinist, a very interesting man,—such a one, indeed, that, though I never met him but once, I could without scruple have written to him. Wonderful to tell, he bears a part in that Review, though his opinions are as opposite to *Hunt's*, and all his

other steeple-hunting whippers-in, as light is to darkness. The hostile article I have not seen;—one of the advantages of living here is, that I never see these things till their season is over, and then, like wasps in winter, their power of stinging is at an end. I should have been angry at seeing your book abused when the abuse could do any hurt, and should have felt that sort of heat in my cheek which denotes the moral temperature of the minute to be above temperate. Now, whenever it falls in my way, which, very likely, never may be the case, it will come as a matter of literary history,—as what was said by some malevolent and ignorant person when a good book first appeared, and so it will furnish me an anecdote to relate when I speak of the book; or if I should ever live to old age, and have leisure to leave behind me that sort of transcript from recollections which would make such excellent materials for the literary history of my own times.

"You are mistaken about Henry White; the fact is briefly this:—at the age of seventeen he published a little volume of poems of very great merit, and sent with them to the different Reviews, a letter stating that his hope was to raise money by them to pursue his studies and get to college. Hamilton, then of the Critical, showed me this letter. I asked him to let me review the book, which he promised; but he sent me no books after the promise. Well, the M. Review noticed this little volume in the most cruel and insulting manner. I was provoked, and wrote to encourage the boy, offering to aid him in a subscription for a costlier publication. I spoke of him

in London, and had assurances of assistance from Sotheby, and, by way of Wynn, from Lord Carysfort. His second letter to me, however, said he was going to Cambridge, under *Simeon's* protection. I plainly saw that the Evangelicals had caught him; and as he did not want what little help I could have procured, and I had no leisure for new correspondences, ceased to write to him, but did him what good I could in the way of reviewing, and getting him friends at Cambridge. He died last autumn; and I received a letter informing me of it. It gave me a sort of shock, because, in spite of his evangelicism, I always expected great things, from the proof he had given of very superior powers; and, in replying to this letter, I asked if there were any intention of publishing any thing which he might have left, and offered to give an opinion upon his papers, and look them over. Down came a box-full, the sight of which literally made my heart ache, and my eyes overflow, for never did I behold such proofs of human industry. To make short, I took the matter up with interest, collected his letters, and have, at the expense of more time than such a poor fellow as myself can very well afford, done what his family are very grateful for, and what I think the world will thank me for too. Of course I have done it gratuitously. His life will affect you, for he fairly died of intense application. Cambridge finished him. When his nerves were already so over-strained that his nights were utter misery, they gave him medicines to enable him to hold out during examination for a prize! The horse won,—but he died after the race! Among his letters there is a great deal of

Methodism: if this procures for the book, as it very likely may, a sale among the righteous over-much, I shall rejoice for the sake of his family, for whom I am very much interested. I have, however, in justice to myself, stated, in the shortest and most decorous manner, that my own views of religion differ widely from his. Still, that I should become, and that, too, voluntarily, an editor of methodistical and Calvinistic letters, is a thing which, when I think of it, excites the same sort of smile that the thoughts of my pension does, and I wonder, like the sailor, what is to be done next.

"Want of room has obliged me to reserve most of your letters, which I meant for the latter end of Espriella's remarks*; but when I came to the latter end, the printing had got beyond my calculation of pages so much, that I was fain to stop. I have good hopes of such a sale as may induce my friend to travel again; my own stock of matter not being half exhausted, nor, indeed, my design half completed. The book ought to be published in a month. Palmerin will appear nearly at the same time, and, perhaps, tend to remove suspicion, if any should subsist. The reception of this book will determine whether it is to be followed up or not, but if it be, be assured that you shall have ample revenge upon Fuseli.

"I know nothing of botany, and every day regret that I do not. It is a settled purpose of my heart, if my children live, to make them good naturalists. If you come either into Yorkshire or Northumberland,

* Mr. Duppa had been furnishing him with some information for this book.

you must not return to the south without touching at Greta Hall, and seeing me in my glory. We have papered the parlour this very day. It is not so fine a room as yours, Mr. Duppa, but it is very beautiful, I assure you,—and the masons are at this time making a ceiling to my study,—and I have got curtains for it, the colour of nankeen,—and there is to be a carpet, and a new fender, and all sorts of things that are proper. Miss Barker tells me she has seen you. I am in good hope of persuading her to come down this summer; and if she comes, she shall not go till I have a set of drawings for the parlour.

"I want to hear, in spite of great trouble and little profit, that you have fixed upon a new subject, and are again at work. There is no being happy without having some worthy occupation in hand.

"Farewell!

R. S."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"May 27. 1807.

"My dear Rickman,

"The pleasantest season in the country for one who lives in it, is undoubtedly the month of blossoms and beauty, when we have not only immediate enjoyment but summer before us. The best season for seeing a country, and especially this country, is during the turn of the leaf. September and October are our best months. We have usually long and delightful autumns, extending further into the winter than they do in the south of England. Our harvests, such as

they are, are sometimes not in till the end of October, — every thing with us being proportionably late.

"Mrs. Rickman has seen all that water colours can do for our lakes, in seeing them as delineated by Glover, who is of all our artists the truest to nature. But I will show her sights beyond all reach of human colouring, — such work as nature herself makes with travelling clouds, and columns of misty sunshine, falling as if from an eye of light in Heaven, like that upon Guy Fawkes in the prayer-book. *Every* point of sight is beautiful, and Derwentwater can only be judged by a panorama, such as you will have from our boat. Do not wait for another year for the sake of including your Scotch journey. God knows what another year may produce, either of good or evil, to both of us. There is always so much chance of being summoned off on the grand tour of the universe, that a man ought not, without good reason, to delay any little trip he may wish to take first upon our microcosm. . . . . .

What you say about breeding up a boy to understand the Keltic language, has often been in my mind. Have you seen a good book in reply to Malthus by Dr. Jarrold? This disjointed question comes in, because he shows how animals that are the most highly finished are most apt, like looking-glasses, to break in the making; and I have always the fear of too much sensorial power in my children so before my eyes, as never willingly to shape any plan about them which might occasion more cause for disappointment. How easy would it be for the London

Institution, or any society, to look out promising lads, and breed them up for specific literary purposes. Should Herbert live, I should more incline (as more connected with my own pursuits) to let him pass two or three years in Biscay, and so procure all that is to be found of Cantabrian antiquity — a distinct stock I learn from the Keltic; but I believe that one part of our population came from those shores, of which the prevalence of dark hair and dark complexions is to me physical proof. Nothing can be so little calculated to advance our stock of knowledge, as our inveterate mode of education, whereby we all spend so many years in learning so little. I was from the age of six to that of twenty learning Greek and Latin, or, to speak more truly, learning nothing else. The little Greek I had sleepeth, if it be not dead, and can hardly wake without a miracle, and my Latin, though abundant enough for all useful purposes, would be held in great contempt by those people who regard the classics as the scriptures of taste. . . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

Some differences having arisen between the Messrs. Longman and Co. and the editor of the Edinburgh Review, it was at this time in contemplation to carry on the work under a different management; and on this supposition they wrote to my father, requesting him to furnish them with certain articles "in his best manner," and offering payment at a higher rate than he had received for the Annual Review. His reply shows that his principle was,

"whatsoever his hand found to do, to do it with his might." * The contemplated separation of the editor from the Review did not, however, take place, and the articles were consequently transferred to the Annual, my father stating, that nothing but the circumstance of the Review having changed hands, and their needing a ready writer, would induce him to have any thing to do with it, disapproving as he did the principles upon which it was conducted.

To the Messrs. Longman and Co.

"June 5. 1807.

"Dear Sirs,

"I will review the books as soon as they arrive, and as well as I can, but I cannot do them better for an Edinburgh Review than for an Annual one. There are many articles which are valued precisely in proportion to the time and labour bestowed upon them, and which therefore can be accurately fixed accordingly; these articles are not of that description. The worst reviewals you have ever had from me have cost me more time and labour than the best. When the subject is good, and I am acquainted with it, the pen flows freely; otherwise it is tilling an ungrateful soil. I can promise you a better review of Clavigero than any other person could furnish; upon the other books, I will do my best. All reviewals, however, which are not seasoned either with

* Ecclesiastes, ix. 10.

severity or impertinence, will seem flat to those whose palates have been accustomed to ———'s sauce-damnable.

"Some time ago, the Bishop of Llandaff observed to me, that few things were more wanted than a regular collection of translations of the ancient historians, comprising the whole of them in their chronological order. It is worth thinking of; and if you should think of it, modern copyright need not stand in your way. Littlebury's Herodotus is better than Beloe's, and Gordon's Tacitus far superior to Murphy's. Such a collection, well annotated, &c., could not fail to sell, and might best be published volume by volume; if it were carried to the end of the Byzantine history, so much the better both for the public and the publishers. This is not a plan in which I could bear any part myself, but it is worth your consideration.

. . . . . .

"The Spanish Joinville, I fear, perished at Hafod. If, however, by good fortune, it should have been returned to you before the fire, have the goodness to enclose it in the next parcel. I wait the arrival of one, expected by every carrier, to make up a bundle for Dr. Aikin: the reason is this; one of the books which I sent for, implies by the title that I have been deceived in one of the Omniana articles, and I ordered the book for the sake of ascertaining the truth and correcting the error.

"Is there not a new edition of Whitehead's Life of Wesley? If you will send me it, and with it the

life published by Dr. Coke for the conference, I will either review it for you, or make a life myself for the Athenæum, having Thompson's here, and also a complete set of Wesley's journals, which I have carefully read and marked for the purpose.

Yours truly,

R. SOUTHEY.

"I hope you will accommodate matters with Jeffrey; for if there should be two Edinburgh Reviews, or if he should set up another under a new title, you would probably be the sufferer, even though yours should manifestly be the best, — such is the force of prejudice."

The following playful effusion was addressed to Hartley Coleridge, who is often referred to in the earlier letters by the name of Moses, it being my father's humour to bestow on his little playfellows many and various such names. When those allusions and this letter were selected for publication, my cousin was yet amongst us, and I had pleasanfly anticipated his half-serious, half-playful remonstrances for thus bringing his childhood before the public. *Now* he is among the departed; and those only who knew him intimately can tell how well-stored and large a mind has gone with him, much less how kind a heart, and how affectionate a disposition. He has found his last peaceful resting-place (where Dr. Arnold so beautifully expresses a wish that he might lie), "beneath the yews of Grasmere churchyard, with the Rotha, with its deep and silent pools,

passing by;" but his name will long be a "living one" among the hill-sides and glens of our rugged country, —

"Stern and wild,
Meet nurse for a poetic child."

To Hartley Coleridge.

"Keswick, June 13. 1807.

"Nephew Job,

"First, I have to thank you for your letter and your poem; and, secondly, to explain why I have not done this sooner. We were a long time without knowing where you were, and, when news came from Miss Barker that you were in London, by the time a letter could have reached you you were gone; and, lastly, Mr. Jackson wrote to you to Bristol. I will now compose an epistle which will follow you farther west.

"Bona Marietta hath had kittens; they were remarkably ugly, all taking after their father Thomas, who there is reason to believe was either uncle or grandsire to Bona herself, the prohibited degrees of consanguinity which you will find at the end of the Bible not being regarded by cats. As I have never been able to persuade this family that catlings, fed for the purpose and smothered with onions, would be rabbits to all eatable purposes, Bona Marietta's ugly progeny no sooner came into the world than they were sent out of it; the river nymph Greta conveyed them to the river god Derwent, and if neither the

eels nor the ladies of the lake have taken a fancy to them on their way, Derwent hath consigned them to the Nereids. You may imagine them converted into sea-cats by favour of Neptune, and write an episode to be inserted in Ovid's Metamorphoses. Bona bore the loss patiently, and is in good health and spirits. I fear that if you meet with any of the race of Mrs. Rowe's cat at Ottery, you will forget poor Marietta. Don't bite your arm, Job.

"We have been out one evening in the boat, — Mr. Jackson, Mrs. Wilson, and the children, — and kindled our fire upon the same place where you drank tea with us last autumn. The boat has been painted, and there is to be a boat-house built for it. Alterations are going on here upon a great scale. The parlour has been transmogrified. That, Hartley, was one of *my* mother's words; your mother will explain it to you. The masons are at work in my study; the garden is enclosed with a hedge; some trees planted behind it, a few shrubs, and abundance of currant trees. We must, however, wait till the autumn before all can be done that is intended in the garden. Mr. White, the Belligerent, is settled in the General's house. Find out why I give him that appellation.

"There has been a misfortune in the family. We had a hen with five chickens, and a gleed has carried off four. I have declared war against the gleed, and borrowed a gun; but since the gun has been in the house, he has never made his appearance. Who can have told him of it? Another hen is sitting, and I

24386

hope the next brood will be luckier. Mr. Jackson has bought a cow, but he has had no calf since *you* left him. Edith has taken your place in his house, and talks to Mrs. Wilson by the hour about *her* Hartley. She grows like a young giantess, and has a disposition to bite her arm, which, you know, is a very foolish trick. Herbert is a fine fellow; I call him the Boy of Basan, because he roars like a young bull when he is pleased; indeed, he promises to inherit his father's vocal powers.

"The weather has been very bad; nothing but easterly winds, which have kept every thing back. We had one day hotter than had been remembered for fourteen years: the glass was at 85° in the shade, in the sun in Mr. Calvert's garden at 118°. The horses of the mail died at Carlisle. I never remember to have felt such heat in England, except one day fourteen years ago, when I chanced to be in the mail-coach, and it was necessary to bleed the horses, or they would have died then. In the course of three days the glass fell forty degrees, and the wind was so cold and so violent that persons who attempted to cross the Fells beyond Penrith were forced to turn back.

"Your friend Dapper, who is, I believe, your god-dog, is in good health, though he grows every summer graver than the last. This is the natural effect of time, which, as you know, has made me the serious man I am. I hope it will have the same effect upon you and your mother, and that, when she returns, she will have left off that evil habit of

quizzing me and calling me names: it is not decorous in a woman of her years.

"Remember me to Mr. Poole, and tell him I shall be glad when he turns laker. He will find tolerable lodgings at the Hill; a boat for fine weather, good stores of books for a rainy day, and as hearty a shake by the hand on his arrival as he is likely to meet with between Stowey and Keswick. Some books of mine will soon be ready for your father. Will he have them sent anywhere? or will he pick them up himself when he passes through London on his way northward? Tell him that I am advancing well in South America, and shall have finished a volume by the end of the year. The Chronicle of the Cid is to go to press as soon as I receive some books from Lisbon, which must first be examined. This intelligence is for him also.

"I am desired to send you as much love as can be enclosed in a letter: I hope it will not be charged double on that account at the post-office: but there is Mrs. Wilson's love, Mr. Jackson's, your Aunt Southey's, your Aunt Lovell's, and Edith's; with a purr from Bona Marietta, an open-mouthed kiss from Herbert, and three wags of the tail from Dapper. I trust they will all arrive safe, and remain,

Dear Nephew Job,

Your dutiful Uncle,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To the Messrs. Longman and Co.

"June 29. 1807.

"Dear Sirs,

"I have been told by persons most capable of judging, that the old translation of Don Quixote is very beautiful. The book has never fallen in my way. If it be well translated, the language of Elizabeth's reign must needs accord better with the style of Cervantes than more modern English would do; and I should think it very probable that it would be better to correct this, than to translate the work anew. As for my undertaking any translation, or indeed any revision, which might lead to the labour, or half the labour, which Palmerin cost me, it is out of the question; but if Mr. Heber can lend you this translation, I will give you my opinion upon it: and I will do for you, if you want it, what you would find much difficulty in getting done by any other person,—add to a Life of Cervantes an account of all his other writings, and likewise of the books in Don Quixote's library, as far as my own stores will reach, and those which we may find access to; and make such notes upon the whole book as my knowledge of the history and literature of Spain can supply. I believe a new translation has been announced by Mr. ———, whose translation of Yriarte proved that either he did not understand the original, or that of all translators he is the most impudent. Such preliminaries as these which I propose might fill half a volume, or extend to a whole one, just as might

be judged most expedient. It gives me very great pleasure to hear that you have engaged for a genuine version of the Arabian Nights,—which I consider as one of the greatest desideratums in modern Oriental literature. We have a number of imitations in our language, which I am still boy enough to delight in; and were you, as the French have done, to publish a complete collection of them, I, for one, should be glad of the opportunity of buying them. If you published them volume by volume, with good prints, like your Theatre, school-boys would take off half an edition.

"As the new Joinville is, beyond all comparison, the most unreasonably dear book I ever saw, so is your Holinshed the cheapest; and I shall keep the copy you have sent accordingly. Dear books may not deter the rich from purchasing, but here is proof for you that cheap ones tempt the poor.

"To-morrow I will make up my parcel for the Athenæum. At Dr. Aikin's request I have undertaken (long since) the Spanish and Portuguese literary part of his Biography. Some articles appeared in the last volume, and, few as they are, I suppose they entitle me to it. Will you ask Dr. A. if this be the case?

Yours truly,

R. SOUTHEY."

To the Messrs. Longman and Co.

"August 25. 1807.

"Dear Sirs,

"The motives which induced me to propose selling an edition of the Cid may be very soon explained. I have been settling myself here in a permanent place of abode, and in consequence many unavoidable expenses have been incurred. Among others, that of removing from Bristol a much larger library than perhaps any other man living, whose means are so scanty, is possessed of. I thank you for the *manner* in which you have objected to purchasing it, and am more gratified by it than I should have been by your acceptance. The sale of this book cannot be so doubtful as that of a poem. A part of it shall be sent up in a few days, and the sooner it is put to press the better. If it suit you, I should much like to let Pople print it. He has not made all the haste he could with Palmerin, but he has taken great pains with it; for never had printer a more perplexed copy to follow, and he has been surprisingly correct.

"I do not know what the state of my account with you is. Mr. Aikin has sent me no returns either for this year's reviewing or the last. I suppose, however, that the edition of Espriella will about balance it; and if I may look to you for about 150*l.* between this and the end of the year, my exigencies will be supplied. Meantime I am desirous that my exertions should be proportionate to my wants. The old edition of Don Quixote, if carefully collated and corrected, will, I believe, be very superior to any

other. As soon as the original arrives, with the remainder of my books, from London, I shall be able to speak decisively; but I have little or no doubt but it will prove as I expect. If this be the case, I am ready to undertake it, to supply such preliminaries as I formerly stated, and to add notes.

"The 'Catalogue Raisonné' cannot be executed by a single person. I could do great part of it,—probably all except the legal and scientific departments. Upon this matter I will think, and write to you in a few days.

"What is this History of South America which I am told is announced? I am getting on with my own Brazil and the River Plata, and it is not possible that any man in England can have one-tenth part of the materials which I possess for such a work. Were you to see the manuscripts which I possess, you would be fully convinced of this; and without seeing them you can hardly form an estimate of their value and importance. . . . . .

Yours truly,

R. SOUTHEY."

To the Messrs. Longman and Co.

"Sept. 20. 1807.

"Dear Sirs,

"I have been considering and re-considering the plan of a Critical Catalogue. On the scale which you propose, it approaches so nearly to what we had formerly projected as a complete Bibliotheca Britannica, that I should be loth to go so near it, and yet stop short. On the present scale (and were you

disposed to extend it to the original extent, it would be quite impossible for me (till my historical labours are closed) the opinions given must necessarily be so short, that in most instances the main business would be to copy title-pages. Now it would take an amanuensis more time tenfold to hunt out the book than to do this; and yet, as you say, my time may be employed more satisfactorily for myself, and probably more to your advantage as well as my own, than in mere transcription.

"Of the possible size of such a work I cannot form even a decent conjecture. Scarce books are more numerous than good ones, have longer titles, and require sometimes a long description. Perhaps the best way would be to begin with a chronological list of all that have been printed before the accession of Henry VIII., when printing may be said to have become common. All these books have a great value from their scarcity, — indeed, their main value, — and better be classed together than under any separate heads. A complete list might be furnished by Mr. Dibdin, who must already have collected all the necessary knowledge for his edition of Ames. Mr. Park could supply the poets, and, indeed, manage the whole better than any other person. I could give a better opinion of works than he could, and believe that I *know* more of them: but there is a sort of title-page and colophon knowledge — in one word, bibliology, — which is exactly what is wanted for this purpose, and in which he is very much my superior. The way in which I could be best employed would be in looking over the MS., adding to it anything in my knowledge, if anything there might be, which had escaped

him, and supplying a brief criticism, where it was wanted, and I could give it.

"Any such assistance I should willingly give; but upon slow and frequent consideration, I certainly think the whole may be better executed in London than here, and by many others than by me; for of all sorts of work it is that in which there must be most transcription, and in which it will be most inconvenient to employ an amanuensis.

"The extent of such a book will probably be wholly immaterial to its sale. None but those who have libraries will buy it; and all those may almost be calculated upon. There will also be some sale for it abroad, more than is usual for English books. The one thing in which it seems possible to improve upon the best catalogue is, by arranging the books in every subdivision chronologically, according to the time when they were written.

. . . . . .

Yours truly,
R. SOUTHEY."

To Walter Scott, Esq.

"Keswick, Sept. 27. 1807.

"My dear Sir,

"I have desired Longman to send you a copy of Palmerin of England, knowing that you, who love to read as well as to sing of knights' and gentle ladies' deeds, will not be dismayed at the sight of four volumes more corpulent than volumes are wont to be in these degenerate days. The romance, though not so

good as Amadis, is a good romance, and far superior to any other of the Spanish school that I have yet seen. I know not whether you will think that part of the preface satisfactory, in which it is argued that Moraes is the author. It is so to myself.*

"I rejoice to hear that we are to have another Lay, and hope we may have as many Last Lays of the Minstrel, as our ancestors had Last Words of Mr. Baxter. My own lays are probably at an end. That portion of my time which I can afford to employ in labouring for fame is given to historical pursuits; and poetry will not procure for me anything more substantial. This motive alone would not, perhaps, wean me from an old calling, if I were not grown more attached to the business of historical research, and more disposed to instruct and admonish mankind than to amuse them.

"The Chronicle of the Cid is just gone to press,—the most ancient and most curious piece of chivalrous history in existence,—a book after your own heart. It will serve as the prologue to a long series of labours, of which, whenever you will take Keswick in your way to or from London, I shall be very glad to show you some samples. I am now settled here, and am getting my books about me; you will find a boat for fine weather, and a good many out-of-the-way books for a rainy day.

"I beg to be remembered to Mrs. Scott.

Yours very truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

* It has since been proved that the real author of Palmerin was Luis Hurtado, a Spaniard. See Quarterly Review, vol. lxxii. p. 10.

To Messrs. Longman and Co.

"Nov. 13. 1807.

"Dear Sirs,

"We have certainly some reason to complain of Cadell and Davies; poor Cervantes, however, has more. . . . . Their splendid edition will be sure to sell for its splendour. I would have made such a work as should have been reprinted after the plates were worn out. I thank you for offering to engage in it, but my nature is as little disposed to this kind of warfare as yours; and I have as many plans to execute as I shall ever find life to perform. Let it pass. Morte d'Arthur is a book which I shall edit with peculiar pleasure, because it has been my delight since I was a school-boy. There is nothing to be done in it but to introduce it with a preface, and accompany it with notes. No time need be lost. As soon as you can meet with a copy, it may be put into Pople's hands: and by the time he has got through it, the introduction and annotations will be ready. I will send back Heber's books (which I have detained, expecting to use them for the D. Quixote). For the Athenæum, it will be sufficient to say that I am preparing an edition of Morte d'Arthur, with an introduction and notes.

"I have materials for a volume of Travels in Portugal, which the expulsion of the English from that country, and the consequent impossibility of my returning there to visit the northern provinces, as was my intention, induces me to think of preparing

for the press. In what form are such works most profitable? If in quarto with engravings, I can procure some sketches and some finished drawings. If you judge it expedient to reprint my former volume, it must undergo some corrections; for though it has pleased the public to receive my first publications far more favourably than my later ones, I am fully sensible of their faults, and look upon them with sufficient humiliation.

"..... The D. Quixote shall be returned in my first parcel. The only reason I have for regretting that Mr. Balfour has elbowed me out of an office to which he certainly has no pretensions whatever is, that I wished to do something, the emolument of which should be certain, for I cannot be anticipating uncertain profits without feeling some anxiety. I have translations enough almost to make a little volume like Lord Strangford's, but then I am not a lord. I have ballads enough for half a volume, but people are more ready to ask copies of them now, than they would be to buy them; and were I to write as many more, according to all likelihood I should not get more by publishing them than any London newspaper would give me for any number of verses, good, bad, or indifferent, sold by the yard, and without the maker's name to warrant them. What I feel most desirous to do is to send Espriella again on his travels, and so complete my design; but this must not be unless he hits the fancy of the public.

Yours truly,

"R. SOUTHEY."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Nov. 15. 1807.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"I do not know that I should have taken up my pen with the intention of inflicting a letter upon you, if it had not been for a suspicion, produced by your last letter, that you expect me in London sooner than it is anyways possible for me to be there, and that peradventure, therefore, you may think it is not worth while to look after my pension till I arrive in proper person to receive it. Now, Mr. Bedford, touching this matter there are two things to be said. My going to London seems to me no very certain thing. It depends something on my uncle's movements, of whose arrival from Lisbon I daily expect to hear; and, of course, if I go, my journey must be so timed as to meet him. It depends, also, something on my finances; and I begin to think that I cannot afford the expense of the journey, for I have had extraordinary goings-out this year in settling myself, and no extraordinary comings-in to counterbalance them. The Constable is a leaden-heeled rascal, and if I do not take care, will be left confoundedly behind. I must work like a negro the whole winter to set things right, and the nearer the time for my projected journey approaches, the less likely is it that I can spare it. My object in going would be to consult certain books for the preliminaries and notes for the Cid; and these books I should assuredly feel myself bound to consult if it required no other sacrifices than those of time

and trouble. But if the necessary expense cannot prudently and justifiably be afforded, I must be content to do the best I can, — which will be quite good enough to satisfy every body except myself. In the second place, if you can, by any interest, get my pension paid, I pray you exert it. I foresee that I shall be kept in hot water by it till I am lucky enough to get some little prize in the lottery of life, which will enable me to wait without inconvenience for arrears. At present the only chance for this is in the sale of Espriella. Should that go through two or three editions, it will set me fairly afloat.

"I thought to have brought up my lee-way by doing a specific piece of job-work, of which I have been rather unhandsomely disappointed. The story is simply this: — Smirke has projected a splendid edition of Don Quixote with Cadell and Davies. They proposed to Longman to take a share in it, and he was authorised by them to ask me to translate it. While I was corresponding with them upon the fitness of revising the first translation in preference, and forming such a plan for preliminaries and annotations as would have made a great body of Spanish learning, Cadell and Davies, unknown to them, struck a bargain with a Mr. Balfour, who is no more able to translate Don Quixote than he would have been to write it. This is some disappointment to me, as I should have been paid a specific sum for my work, and could have calculated upon it. The Longmans behave as they ought to do in the business. They refuse to take any share in the work, in consequence of this unhandsome dealing towards me, and offer to

publish my edition upon our ordinary terms of halving the profits. This, however, would not serve my purpose.

"My affairs are not in a bad train, except for the present. The profits of the current edition of Espriella, and of the unborn one of the Cid, are anticipated and gone. Those of the Specimens, of the small edition of Madoc, and of Palmerin, are untouched. But if the three send me in 100*l.*, at the end of the year's sale, it will be more than I expect. The first volume of Brazil will be ready for the press next summer. I think also of publishing my travels in Portugal, for which good materials have long lain by me, and we are now talking of editing Morte d'Arthur. Reviewing comes among the ordinaries of the year; in my conscience I do not think anybody else does so much and gets so little for it. Have I told you that my whole profits upon Madoc up to Midsummer last amount to 25*l.*? and the whole it is likely to be, unless the remaining 134 copies be sold as waste paper.

"I shall do yet; and if there be anything like a dispirited tone in this letter, it is more because my eyes are weak, than for any other cause. It is likely that Espriella will bear me out, — I must be more than commonly unlucky if it does not, — and if it does not, I will seek more review employment, write in more magazines, and scribble verses for the newspapers. As long as I can keep half my time for labours worthy of myself and of posterity, I shall not feel debased by sacrificing the other, however unworthily it may be employed. You will say, why do

you not write for the stage? the temptations to it are so strong, and I have made the resolution so often, that not to have done it yet is good proof of a self-conviction that it would not be done well; besides, I have not leisure from present urgencies.

"Now do not fancy me bent double like the Pilgrim, under this load upon my back; I am as bolt upright as ever, and in as wholesome good spirits, and, as soon as this letter is folded and sent off, shall go on with reviewing Buchanan's Travels, and forget everything except what I know concerning Malabar.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Richard Heber, Esq.

"Keswick, Nov. 16. 1807.

"My dear Sir,

"I am now about to edit Morte d'Arthur. My Round-table knowledge is as extensive as that of any, perhaps, but my Round-table library is scanty: of old books it contains none except the English Geoffrey of Monmouth and the two long Poems of Luigi Alemanni. My plan is, to give the history of Arthur, and collect, by the aid of Turner, Owen, and Edward Williams, all that the Welsh themselves can supply, and then the critical bibliography of the Round Table. The notes will refer to the originals from which this delightful book has been compiled, and give all the illustrations that I can supply. Once more, therefore, I must beg your assistance, and

ask you to send me as many books as you have which bear upon this subject. A Mr. Goldsmid sent me a list of his romances some time ago, and his collection will probably contain what yours may want. Will you add to them your copy of Oviedo's History of the New World?

"The printer's copy of Palmerin was, I hope, returned to you, according to your desire and my directions. It will show you that I am not an idle editor, whatever those unhappy Specimens may have induced you to think. Should this Palmerin sell, I would gladly follow it with the third part, if the original could be procured; but the only chance of meeting with one would be in the King's library, and there, of course, it would be useless.

"I have many things in hand. The Chronicle of the Cid will be likely to please you. It will soon be followed by the History of Brazil, and that by the other part of the History of Portugal and its Conquests. With poetry I must have done, unless I could afford another Madoc for five and twenty pounds, which is all that it has pleased the public to let me get by it. I feel some pride in having done well, but it is more than counterbalanced by the consciousness that I could do better, and yet am never likely to have an opportunity. St. Cecilia herself could not have played the organ if there had been nobody to blow the bellows for her. Drafts upon posterity will not pass for current expenses. My poems have sold exactly in an inverse ratio to their merit; and I cannot go back to boyhood, and put myself again upon a level with the taste of the book-

buying readers. My numerous plans and collections for them will figure away when I am dead, and afford excellent occasion for exclamations of edifying regret from those very persons who would have traduced what they will think it decorous to lament.

"You will see, in the preface to Palmerin, that I have tracked Shakspeare, Sydney, and Spenser to Amadis of Greece. I have an imperfect copy of Florisel of Nequea, the next in the series,—and there I find the mock execution of Pamela and Philoclea, and Amoret with her open wound.

Yours very truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, Nov. 24. 1807.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"Mine is a strong spirit, and I am very desirous that you should not suppose it to be more severely tried than it is. The temporary inconvenience which I feel is solely produced by unavoidable expenses in settling myself, which will not occur again; and if Espriella slides into a good sale, or if one edition of our deplorable Specimens should go off, I shall be floated into smooth water. Bear this in mind, also, that I can command an income, fully equivalent to all my wants, whenever I choose to write for money, and for nothing else. Our Fathers in the Row would find me task-work, to any amount which I might wish to undertake, and I could assuredly make 300*l.*

a-year as easily as I now make half that sum, simply by writing anonymously, and doing what five hundred trading authors could do just as well. This is the worst which can befall me.

"Old John Southey dealt unjustly by me,— but it was what I expected, and his brother will, without doubt, do just the same. In case of Lord Somerville's death without a son, a considerable property devolves to me or my representatives — encumbered, however, with a lawsuit to recover it; and, as I should be compelled to enter into this, I have only to hope his Lordship will have the goodness to live as long as I do, and save me from the disquietude which this would occasion. I used to think that the reputation which I should establish would ultimately turn to marketable account, and that my books would sell as well as if they were seasoned with slander or obscenity. In time they will; it will not be in my time. I have, however, an easy means of securing some part of the advantage to my family, by forbearing to publish any more corrected editions during my lifetime, and leaving such corrections as will avail to give a second lease of copyright, and make any bookseller's editions of no value. As for my family, I have no fears for them; they would find friends enough when I am gone; and having this confidence, you may be sure that there is not a lighter-hearted man in the world than myself.

"Basta,—or, as we say in Latin, Ohe jam satis est. My eyes are better, which I attribute to an old velvet bonnet of Edith's, converted without alteration into a most venerable studying cap for my worship; it keeps

my ears warm, and I am disposed to believe that having the sides of my head cold, as this Kamschatka weather needs must make it, affected the eyes. Mr. Bedford, you may imagine what a venerable and, as the French say, *penetrating* air this gives me. Hair, forehead, eyebrows, and eyes are hidden,—nothing appears but nose; but that is so cold that I expect every morning when I get out of bed, to see the snow lie on the summit of it. This complaint was not my old Egyptian* plague, but pure weakness, which makes what I have said probable. . . . .

"We had an interesting guest here a few evenings ago, who came to visit Tom,—Captain Guillem, Nelson's first lieutenant at Trafalgar, a sailor of the old Blake and Dampier breed, who has risen from before the mast, was in Duncan's action, and at Copenhagen, &c. He told us more of Nelson than I can find time to write. . . . . .

. . . . . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Dec. 5. 1807.

"My dear Grosvenor,

". . . . . .

Our Fathers inform me that about 300 copies of Espriella remain unsold, and that probably it would be expedient to begin reprinting it in about a month.

* A species of ophthalmia, from which he formerly suffered.

You may have heard or seen that D. Manuel has a friend in the Courier and in the Morning Post. This is Stuart's doing, who will befriend him still more by giving me some facts for what farther is to be added to complete the object of the book. As for the Specimens, I am perfectly satisfied that it will be very easy to metamorphose them into a good book, if ever there should be a second edition.

"I have seen only one reviewal of it, which was in the Monthly Magazine some months ago, and then the author contrived to invalidate all the censure which he had cast upon it, by abusing me *in toto* as a blockhead, coxcomb, &c. &c.

"I am a good deal surprised at your saying that the dunces of 1700 were like the dunces of 1800: surely you have said this without thinking what you were saying; they are as different as the fops of the two periods. You are wrong also in your praise of Ellis's book: his is a very praiseworthy book, as far as matter of fact, history, and arrangement go; but the moment that ends, and the series of specimens begins, all views of manner, and all light of history, disappear, and you have little else than a collection of amatory pieces selected with little knowledge and less taste.

. . . . . .

"Captain Guillem is at home in the Isle of Man, having realised from ten to fifteen thousand pounds. He has no chance of being employed, having no interest to get a ship, and, what is better, no wish to have one. Yet he is precisely such a man as ought to be employed,—a true-bred English sailor. Let him be at sea forty years, and there would be no mutiny.

on board his ship; boy-captains are the persons who make mutinies. Oh, Grosvenor Bedford, what a pamphlet would I write about the navy if my brother were not in it!

"I do not send you Henry White's Remains, because, though as many copies were offered me as I should choose to take, I declined taking any more than one for myself. I hope they will sell, and believe so; his piety will recommend the book to the Evangelicals, and his genius to men of letters.

"God bless you!

R. S."

My father's acquaintance with Sir Walter Scott, commenced by the short visit he had made to Ashestiel in the autumn of 1805, and, continued, as we have seen, by letter, now began to assume a closer character, and through his friendly mediation some overtures were now made to him to take service in the corps of his opponent Jeffrey, in the Edinburgh Review. "As you occasionally review," Sir Walter wrote to him at this time (November 1807), "will you forgive my suggesting a circumstance for your consideration, to which you will give exactly the degree of weight you please? I am perfectly certain that Jeffrey would think himself both happy and honoured in receiving any communications which you might send him, choosing your books and expressing your own opinions. The terms of the Edinburgh Review are ten guineas per sheet, and will shortly be advanced considerably. I question if the same unpleasant sort of work is anywhere else so well compensated. The

only reason which occurs to me as likely to prevent your rendering the Edinburgh some critical assistance, is the severity of the criticisms upon Madoc and Thalaba. I do not know if this will be at all removed by my assuring you, as I do upon my honour, that Jeffrey has, notwithstanding the flippancy of these attacks, the most sincere respect both for your person and talents. The other day I designedly led the conversation on that subject, and had the same reason I always have had to consider his attack as arising from a radical difference in point of taste, or, rather, feeling of poetry, but by no means from anything approaching either to enmity or a false conception of your talents. I do not think that a difference of this sort should prevent you, if you are otherwise disposed to do so, from carrying a portion, at least, of your critical labours to a better market than the Annual. Pray think of this; and, if you are disposed to give your assistance, I am positively certain that I can transact the matter with the utmost delicacy towards both my friends. I am certain you may add 100*l.* a year, or double that sum, to your income in this way, with almost no trouble; and, as times go, that is no trifle."

In this letter (which is published in Sir Walter Scott's Life) he speaks also of his intention of publishing a small edition of the Morte d'Arthur, which, as the reader has seen, was ground already preoccupied by my father, who, in his reply, explains this, as well as answers at length his friend's proposal.

To Walter Scott, Esq.

"Keswick, Dec. 8. 1807.

"My dear Scott,

"I am very much obliged to you for the offer which you make concerning the Edinburgh Review, and fully sensible of your friendliness, and the advantages which it holds out. I bear as little ill-will to Jeffrey as he does to me, and attribute whatever civil things he has said of me to especial civility, whatever pert ones (a truer epithet than severe would be) to the habit which he has acquired of taking it for granted that the critic is, by virtue of his office, superior to every writer whom he chooses to summon before him. The reviewals of Thalaba and Madoc do in no degree influence me. Setting all personal feelings aside, the objections which weigh with me against bearing any part in this journal are these: — I have scarcely one opinion in common with it upon any subject. Jeffrey is for peace, and is endeavouring to frighten the people into it: I am for war as long as Bonaparte lives. He is for Catholic emancipation: I believe that its immediate consequence would be to introduce an Irish priest into every ship in the navy. My feelings are still less in unison with him than my opinions. On subjects of moral or political importance no man is more apt to speak in the very gall of bitterness than I am, and this habit is likely to go with me to the grave: but that sort of bitterness in which he indulges, which tends

directly to wound a man in his feelings, and injure him in his fame and fortune (Montgomery is a case in point), appears to me utterly inexcusable. Now, though there would be no necessity that I should follow this example, yet every separate article in the Review derives authority from the merit of all the others; and, in this way, whatever of any merit I might insert there would aid and abet opinions hostile to my own, and thus identify me with a system which I thoroughly disapprove. This is not said hastily. The emolument to be derived from writing at ten guineas a sheet, Scotch measure, instead of seven pounds, Annual, would be considerable; the pecuniary advantage resulting from the different manner in which my future works would be handled, probably still more so. But my moral feelings must not be compromised. To Jeffrey as an individual I shall ever be ready to show every kind of individual courtesy; but of Judge Jeffrey of the Edinburgh Review I must ever think and speak as of a bad politician, a worse moralist, and a critic, in matters of taste, equally incompetent and unjust. . .

"Your letter was delayed a week upon the road by the snow. I wish it had been written sooner, and had travelled faster, or that I had communicated to you my own long-projected edition of Morte d'Arthur. I am sorry to have forestalled you, and you are the only person whom I should be sorry to forestal in this case, because you are the only person who could do it certainly as well, and perhaps better, with less labour than myself. My plan is to give the whole bibliology of the Round Table in the pre-

liminaries, and indicate the source of every chapter in the notes.

"The reviewal of Wordsworth I am not likely to see, the Edinburgh very rarely lying in my way. My own notions respecting the book agree in the main with yours, though I may probably go a step farther than you in admiration. There are certainly some pieces there which are good for nothing (none, however, which a bad poet could have written), and very many which it was highly injudicious to publish. That song to Lord Clifford, which you particularise, is truly a noble poem. The Ode upon Pre-existence is a dark subject darkly handled. Coleridge is the only man who could make such a subject luminous. The Leech-gatherer is one of my favourites; there he has caught Spenser's manner, and, in many of the better poemets, has equally caught the best manner of old Wither, who, with all his long fits of dulness and prosing, had the heart and soul of a poet in him. The sonnets are in a grand style. I only wish Dundee had not been mentioned. James Grahame and I always call that man Claverhouse, the name by which the devils know him below.

"Marmion is expected as impatiently by me as he is by ten thousand others. Believe me, Scott, no man of real genius was ever yet a puritanical stickler for correctness, or fastidious about any faults except his own. The best artists, both in poetry and painting, have produced the most. Give me more lays, and correct them at leisure for after editions — not laboriously, but when the amendment comes

naturally and unsought for. It never does to sit down doggedly to correct.

"The Cid is about half through the press, and will not disappoint you. It is much in the language of Amadis, both books having been written before men began to think of a fine style. This is one cause why Amadis is so far superior to Palmerin. There are passages of a poet's feeling in the Cid, and some of the finest circumstances of chivalry. I expect much credit from this work.

"To recur to the Edinburgh Review, let me once more assure you that, if I do not grievously deceive myself, the criticisms upon my own poems have not influenced me; for, however unjust they were, they were less so, and far less uncourteous, than what I meet with in other journals; and, though these things injure me materially in a pecuniary point of view, they make no more impression upon me than the bite of a sucking flea would do upon Garagantua. The business of reviewing, much as I have done in it myself, I disapprove of, but, most of all, when it is carried on upon such a system as Jeffrey's. The judge is criminal who acquits the guilty, but he is far more so who condemns the innocent. In the Annual I have only one coadjutor, all the other writers being below contempt. In the Edinburgh I should have had many with whom I should have felt it creditable to myself to have been associated, if the irreconcileable difference which there is between Jeffrey and myself upon every great principle of taste, morality, and policy, did not occasion an irremovable difficulty. Meantime, I am as sincerely

obliged to you as if this difference did not exist, and I could have availed myself of all its advantages, to the importance of which I am fully sensible.

"I am very curious for your Life of Dryden, that I may see how far your estimate of his merits agrees with my own. In the way of editing we want the yet unpublished metrical romances from the Auchinleck MS., of which you have just given such an account as to whet the public curiosity, and a collection of the Scotch poets. K. James, who is the best, has not been well edited; Blind Harry but badly; Dunbar, and many others, are not to be procured. Your name would make such a speculation answer, however extensive the collection might be. I beg my respects to Mrs. Scott, and am,

Yours very truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

CHAPTER XIV.

BRAZILIAN AFFAIRS. — DISLIKE OF LEAVING HOME. — CONDEMNS THE IDEA OF MAKING PEACE WITH BONAPARTE. — THE INQUISITION. — THE SALE OF HIS WORKS. — GRATEFUL FEELINGS TOWARDS MR. COTTLE. — THOUGHTS ON THE REMOVAL OF HIS BOOKS TO KESWICK. — MEETING WITH THE AUTHOR OF GEBIR. — REMARKS ON MARMION. — POLITICAL OPINIONS. — KEHAMA. — HIS POSITION AS AN AUTHOR. — ON METRES. — POPULATION OF SPAIN. — CONDUCT OF THE FRENCH AT LISBON. — REMARKS ON DISEASES. — PHYSICAL PECULIARITIES. — SPANISH AFFAIRS. — PRESENT OF BOOKS FROM MR. NEVILLE WHITE. — ACCOUNT OF FLOATING ISLAND IN DERWENTWATER. — HE PREDICTS THE DEFEAT OF THE FRENCH IN THE PENINSULA. — PORTUGUESE LITERATURE. — INFANCY OF HIS LITTLE BOY. — POETICAL DREAMS. — CHRONICLE OF THE CID. — DOUBTS ABOUT GOING TO SPAIN. — ANECDOTE OF AN IRISH DUEL. — LITERARY EMPLOYMENTS. — ADVICE TO A YOUNG AUTHOR. — THE CONVENTION OF CINTRA. — SPANISH BALLADS. — POLITICS OF THE EDINBURGH REVIEW. — THE QUARTERLY REVIEW SET ON FOOT. — THE CHRONICLE OF THE CID. — KEHAMA. — ARTICLES IN THE QUARTERLY REVIEW. — SPANISH AFFAIRS. — 1808.

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Jan. 11. 1808.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"..... .....

I have seen both the Scotch and the more rascally British Reviews of our Specimens,—both a good deal worse than the book itself, which is a great consola-

tion. For they have really not discovered its defects, and have imputed faults to it which it does not possess. If the first edition can be got off, I will make it a curious and good book.

"How soon I may see you Heaven knows: the sooner the better. My uncle is in town, and applications are made to him from all quarters for that information which Lord G. rejected last year, as relating to the *wrong* side of S. America,—a strong fact, between you and I, against his statesmanship. I am in hopes he will draw up an account of the present state of Brazil (which no other person living can do so well), while I proceed with the history. This removal of the Braganza family is a great event, though it has been done not merely without that dignity which might have been given to it, but even meanly and pitifully. . . . . Still, the event itself is a great one: and if I could transfuse into you all the recollections, &c. which it brings with it to me, you would feel an interest in it which it is not very easy to describe.

"I am hard at work, and shall be able to send my first volume to press as soon as I return from London. Meanwhile, the thought of the journey plagues me,—the older I grow the more do I dislike going from home. Oh dear! oh dear! there is such a comfort in one's old coat and old shoes, one's own chair and own fireside, one's own writing-desk and own library,—with a little girl climbing up to my neck, and saying, 'Don't go to London, papa,—you must stay with Edith,'—and a little boy, whom I have taught to speak the language of cats, dogs, cuckoos, and jack-

asses, &c., before he can articulate a word of his own; —there is such a comfort in all these things, that *transportation* to London for four or five weeks seems a heavier punishment than any sins of mine deserve. Nevertheless, I shall be heartily glad to see Grosvenor Bedford, provided Grosvenor Bedford does not look as if his liver were out of order. . . . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Walter Scott, Esq.

"Keswick, Feb. 11. 1808.

"My dear Scott,

"I should long ago have thanked you for your offer of Sir Lancelot, but as I had written to Heber requesting from him all his Round-table books, I waited, or rather have been waiting, to see whether or not it would be among them. It is above two months since news came that Heber would look them out for me; but as they are not yet arrived, and my appearance in London has been expected for the last two or three weeks, it is probable that he is waiting to let me look them out for myself. I go for London next week, my family having just been increased by the birth of another girl,—an event for which I have been waiting.

"Wordsworth has completed a most masterly poem upon the fate of the Nortons; two or three lines in the old Ballad of the Rising in the North gave him the hint. The story affected me more deeply than I

wish to be affected; younger readers, however, will not object to the depth of the distress,—and nothing was ever more ably treated. He is looking, too, for a narrative subject, to be pitched in a lower key. I have recommended to him that part of Amadis wherein he appears as Beltenebros,—which is what Bernardo Tasso had originally chosen, and which is in itself as complete as could be desired. This reminds me that to-day I met with the name of Amadis as a Christian name in Portugal, in the age between Lobeira and Montaloo. Having found Oriana, Briolania, Grimanesa, and Lisuarte there before, they may be looked upon as five good witnesses that the story is originally Portuguese.

"My Chronicle of the Cid is printed, and waits for the introduction and supererogatory notes, both which will be of considerable length, and must be completed at Holland House, where I shall find exactly those books which were out of reach of my means. The History of Brazil will be in the press as soon as this is out of it. What an epoch in history will this emigration of the Braganzas prove, if we are not frightened by cowardly politicians into making peace, and cajoling them back again to Portugal! Such men as these have long since extinguished all political morality and political honesty among us, and now they would extinguish national honour, which is all we have left to supply their place! My politics would be, to proclaim to France and to the world that England will never make peace with Napoleon Bonaparte, because he has proved himself to be one whom no treaties and no ties can bind, and still more

because he is notoriously a murderer, with whom it is infamous to treat. Send this language into France, and let nothing else go into it that our ships can keep out, and the French themselves would, in no very long time, rid the world of a tyrant. The light of Prince Arthur's shield would bring Orgoglio to the ground. God bless you!

Yours very truly,
R. SOUTHEY."

To S. T. Coleridge, Esq.

"Feb. 12. 1808.

"My dear Coleridge,

"De Origine et Progressu Officii S. Inquisitionis, ejusque dignitate et utilitate, Antone Ludovico a Panamo, Boroxense, Archidiaconio et Canonico Legionense. . . 1598, folio. The book is in the Red Cross Street Library. I read it six years ago, and sent up an account of it within the last six weeks for Dr. Aikin's Biography, where it will be in villanously bad company. You will find there that God was the first Inquisitor, and that the first Auto da Fè was held upon Adam and Eve. You will read enough to show you that Catholic writers defend the punishment of heretics, and quite sufficient to make your blood run cold. I have the History of the Portuguese Inquisition to write, and look on to the task with absolute horror. I am decidedly hostile to what is called Catholic Emancipation, as I am to what is called peace.

"I have had a correspondence with Clarkson concerning the best mode of publishing my Brazilian history; and what he points out as the best plan is little better than the half-and-half way, and involves a great deal of trouble, and what is worse, a great deal of solicitation. I am a bad trading author, and doomed always to be so, but it is not the bookseller's fault; the public do not buy poetry unless it be made fashionable; mine gets reviewed by enemies who are always more active than friends; one reviewer envies me, another hates me, and a third tries his hand upon me as fair game. Thousands meantime read the books; but they borrow them, even those persons who are what they call my friends, and who know that I live by these books, never buy them themselves, and then wonder that they do not sell. Espriella has sold rapidly, for which I have to thank Stuart; the edition is probably by this time exhausted, and, I verily believe, half the sale must be attributed to the puffs in the Courier. The sale of a second edition would right me in Longman's books. Puff me, Coleridge! if you love me, puff me! Puff a couple of hundreds into my pocket!

"As for the booksellers, I am disposed to distinguish between Long*man* and Trades*man* nature (setting hu*man* nature out of the question): now Trades*man* nature is very bad, but Long*man* nature is a great deal better, and I am inclined to believe that it will get the better of the evil principle, and that liberal dealing may even prove catching. It is some proof of this that his opinion of me and conduct

towards me alter not, notwithstanding the spiders spin their webs so securely over whole piles of Madoc and Thalaba. . . . .

"I am strongly moved by the spirit to make an attack upon Jeffrey along his whole line, beginning with his politics. Stuart would not be displeased to have half a dozen letters. Nothing but the weary work it would be to go through his reviews for the sake of collecting the blunders in them, prevents me. He, and other men who are equally besotted and blinded by party, will inevitably frighten the nation into peace, the only thing which can be more mischievous and more dishonourable than our Danish expedition. I wish to God you would lift up your voice against it. Alas! Coleridge, is it to be wondered at, that we pass for a degenerated race, when those who have the spirit of our old worthies in them, let that spirit fret itself away in silence!

"Lamb's book I have heard of, and know not what it is. If co-operative labour were as practicable as it is desirable, what a history of English literature might he and you and I set forth!

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Joseph Cottle, Esq.

"Greta Hall, April 20. 1808.

"My dear Cottle,

"On opening a box to-day, the contents of which I had not seen since the winter of 1799, your picture

made its appearance. Of all Robert Hancock's performances it is infinitely the best. I cannot conceive a happier likeness. I have been thinking of you and of old times ever since it came to light. I have been reading your Fall of Cambria, and in the little interval that remains before supper must talk to you in reply to your letter.

"What you say of my copyrights affected me very much. Dear Cottle, set your heart at rest on that subject. It ought to be at rest. These were yours, fairly bought, and fairly sold. You bought them on the chance of their success, which no London bookseller would have done; and had they not been bought, they could not have been published at all. Nay, if you had not purchased Joan of Arc, the poem never would have existed, nor should I, in all probability, ever have obtained that reputation which is the capital on which I subsist, nor that power which enables me to support it.

"But this is not all. Do you suppose, Cottle, that I have forgotten those true and most essential acts of friendship which you showed me when I stood most in need of them? Your house was my house when I had no other. The very money with which I bought my wedding-ring and paid my marriage fees, was supplied by you. It was with your sisters I left Edith during my six months' absence, and for the six months' after my return it was from you that I received, week by week, the little on which we lived, till I was enabled to live by other means. It is not the settling of a cash account that can cancel obligations like these. You are in the habit

of preserving your letters, and if you were not, I would entreat you to preserve *this*, that it might be seen hereafter. Sure I am, there never was a more generous or a kinder heart than yours; and you will believe me when I add, that there does not live that man upon earth whom I remember with more gratitude and more affection. My head throbs and my eyes burn with these recollections. Good night! my dear old friend and benefactor.

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, April 26. 1808.

"Dear Grosvenor.

"From one scene of confusion to another. You saw me in London everlastingly at work in packing my books; and here they are now lying in all parts about me, up to my knees in one place, up to my eyes in another, and above head and ears in a third. I can scarcely find stepping places through the labyrinth, from one end of the room to the other. Like Pharaoh's frogs, they have found their way everywhere, even into the bedchambers. . . . . And now, Grosvenor, having been married above twelve years, I have for the first time collected all my books together. What a satisfaction this is you cannot imagine, for you cannot conceive the hundredth part of the inconvenience and vexation I have endured for want of them. But the joy which they give me brings with it a mingled feeling, — the

recollection that there are as many materials heaped up as I shall ever find life to make use of; and the humiliating reflection how little knowledge can be acquired in the most laborious life of man, that knowledge becoming every age less and less, in proportion to the accumulation of events. For some things I have been born too late. Under the last reign, for instance, as in the first half of this, my pension would have been an income adequate to my wants, and my profits as a writer would have been at least quadrupled. On the other hand, bad as these times are, they are better than those which are coming.

"At Bristol I met with the man of all others whom I was most desirous of meeting, — the only man living of whose praise I was ambitious, or whose censure would have humbled me. You will be curious to know who this could be. Savage Landor, the author of Gebir, a poem which, unless you have heard me speak of it, you have probably never heard of at all. I never saw any one more unlike myself in every prominent part of human character, nor any one who so cordially and instinctively agreed with me on so many of the most important subjects. I have often said before we met, that I would walk forty miles to see him, and having seen him, I would gladly walk fourscore to see him again. He talked of Thalaba, and I told him of the series of mythological poems which I had planned, — mentioned some of the leading incidents on which they were to have been formed, and also told him for what reason they were laid aside; — in plain English, that I could not afford to write them. Landor's reply was, 'Go on

with them, and I will pay for printing them, as many as you will write and as many copies as you please.' I had reconciled myself to my abdication (if the phrase may be allowable), and am not sure that this princely offer has not done me mischief; for it has awakened in me old dreams and hopes which had been laid aside, and a stinging desire to go on, for the sake of showing him poem after poem, and saying, 'I need not accept your offer, but I have done this because you made it.' It is something to be praised by one's peers; ordinary praise I regard as little as ordinary abuse. God bless you!

R. S."

To Walter Scott, Esq.

"Keswick, April 22. 1808.

"My dear Scott.

"Your letter followed me to London. The hope which it held out that we might meet here, and the endless round of occupations in which I was involved during the whole nine weeks of my absence, prevented me from thanking you for Marmion so soon as I ought, and should otherwise have done.

"Half the poem I had read at Heber's before my own copy arrived. I went punctually to breakfast with him, and he was long enough dressing to let me devour so much of it. The story is made of better materials than the Lay, yet they are not so well fitted together. As a whole it has not pleased me so much; in parts it has pleased me more. There is

nothing so finely conceived in your former poem as the death of Marmion; there is nothing finer in its conception any where.

"The introductory epistles I did not wish away, because as poems they gave me great pleasure, but I wished them at the end of the volume or at the beginning, — any where except where they were. My taste is perhaps peculiar in disliking all interruptions in narrative poetry. When the poet lets his story sleep, and talks in his own person, it is to me the same sort of unpleasant effect that is produced at the end of an act; you are alive to know what follows, and lo — down comes the curtain, and the fiddlers begin with their abominations. The general opinion, however, is with me in this particular instance.

"I am highly gratified by the manner in which you speak of Kirke White's Remains. That book has been received to my heart's desire. The edition (750) sold in less than three months, and there is every probability that it will obtain a steady sale, so as to produce something considerable to his mother and sisters.

"I saw Frere in London, and he has promised to let me print his translations from the Poema del Cid. They are admirably done, — indeed, I never saw any thing so difficult to do, and done so excellently, except your supplement to Sir Tristrem. I do not believe that many men have a greater command of language and versification than myself, and yet this task of giving a specimen of that wonderful poem I shrunk from, fearing the difficulty. At present I

am putting together the materials of my introduction, which, with the supplementary notes, will take about three months in printing; at least, it will be as long before the book can be published. The price of paper stops all my other press-work for the present.

"So much of my life passes in this blessed retirement, that when I go to London the effect is a little like what Nourjahad used to find after one of his long naps. I find a woful difference of political opinion between myself and most of those persons who have hitherto held the same feelings with me; and yet it should seem that they have been sleeping over the great events of these latter years, not I. There is a base and cowardly feeling abroad, which would humble this country at the feet of France. This feeling I have everywhere been combating with vehemence; but at the same time I have execrated with equal vehemence the business of Copenhagen: Ishmael-like, my hand has been against everybody, and everybody's hand against me. Wordsworth is the only man who agrees with me on both points. I require, however, no other sanction to convince me that I am right. Coleridge justifies the attack on Denmark, but he justifies it upon individual testimony of hostile intentions on the part of that court, and that testimony by no means amounts to proof in my judgment. But what is done is done; and the endless debates upon the subject, which have no other meaning and can have no other end than that of harassing the ministry, disgust me, as they do every one who has the honour of England at heart. Such a system makes the publicity of

debate a nuisance, and will terminate in putting a stop to it.

"Is there any hope of seeing you this year at the Lakes? I should much like to show you Kehama. During my circuit I fell in with Savage Landor, the author of Gebir, to whom I spoke of my projected series of mythological poems, and said also for what reason the project had been laid aside. He besought me to go on with them, and said he would print them at his expense. Without the least thought of accepting this princely offer, it has stung me to the very core; and as the bite of the tarantula has no cure but dancing, so will there be none but singing for this. Great poets have no envy; little ones are full of it. I doubt whether any man ever criticised a good poem maliciously, unless he had written a bad one himself.

Yours truly,
R. SOUTHEY."

To Walter Savage Landor, Esq.

"May 2. 1808.

"I have sent you all that is written of the Curse of Kehama: you offered to print it for me; if ever I finish the poem it will be because of that offer, though without the slightest intention of accepting it. Enough is written to open the story of the poem, and serve as a specimen of its manner, though much of what is to follow would be in a wilder strain. Tell me if your ear is offended with the rhymes when

they occur, or if it misses them when they fail. I wish it had never been begun, because I like it too well to throw it behind the fire, and not well enough to complete it without the 'go on' of some one whose approbation is worth having.

"My history as an author is not very honourable to the age in which we live. By giving up my whole time to worthless work in reviews, magazines, and newspapers, I could thrive; as by giving up half my time to them, I contrive to live. In the time thus employed every year I could certainly produce such a poem as Thalaba, and if I did I should starve. You have awakened in me projects that had been laid asleep, and recalled hopes which I had dismissed contentedly, and, as I thought, for ever. If you think Kehama deserves to be finished, I will borrow hours from sleep, and finish it by rising two hours before my customary time; and when it is finished I will try whether subscribers can be procured for five hundred copies, by which means I should receive the whole profit to myself. The bookseller's share is too much like the lion in the fable: 30 or 33 per cent. they first deduct as booksellers, and then half the residue as publishers. I have no reason to complain of mine: they treat me with great respect and great liberality, but I wish to be independent of them; and this, if it could be effected, would make me so.

"The will and the power to produce anything great are not often found together. I wish you would write in English, because it is a better language than Latin, and because the disuse of English as a living and literary language would be the greatest evil that

could befall mankind. It would cost you little labour to write perspicuously, and thus get rid of your only fault. . . . . .

"Literary fame is the only fame of which a wise man ought to be ambitious, because it is the only lasting and living fame. Bonaparte will be forgotten before his time in Purgatory is half over, or but just remembered like Nimrod, or other cut-throats of antiquity, who serve us for the commonplaces of declamation. If you made yourself King of Crete, you would differ from a hundred other adventurers only in chronology, and in the course of a millennium or two, nothing more would be known of your conquest than what would be found in the stereotype Gebir prefixed as an account of the author. Pour out your mind in a great poem, and you will exercise authority over the feelings and opinions of mankind as long as the language lasts in which you write.

. . . . . .

"Farewell! I wish you had purchased Loweswater instead of Llantony. I wish you were married, because the proverb about a rolling stone applies to a single heart, and I wish you were as much a Quaker as I am. Christian stoicism is wholesome for all minds; were I your confessor, I should enjoin you to throw aside Rousseau, and make Epictetus your manual. Probatum est.

Yours truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Walter Savage Landor, Esq.

"May 20. 1808.

"You have bound me to the completion of Kehama, and, if I have health and eye-sight, completed it will be within twelve months. Want of practice has not weakened me: I have ascertained this, and am proceeding.

"I will use such materials as have stood the test; those materials are the same in all languages, and we know what they are. With respect to metre it is otherwise: there we must look to English only, and in English we have no other great poem than the Paradise Lost. Blank verse has long appeared to me the noblest measure of which our language is capable, but it would not suit Kehama. There must be quicker, wilder movements; there must be a gorgeousness of ornament also,—eastern gem-work, and sometimes rhyme must be rattled upon rhyme, till the reader is half dizzy with the thundering echo. My motto must be, —

Ποικίλον εἶδος ἔχων, ὅτι ποικίλον ὕμνον ἀφάσσω.

This is not from any ambition of novelty, but from the nature and necessity of the subject. I am well aware that novelty in such things is an obstacle to success; Thalaba has proved it to be so. The mass of mankind hate innovation: they hate to unlearn what they have learnt wrong, and they hate to confess their ignorance by submitting to learn anything right. I would tread in the beaten road rather than get

among thorns by turning out of it; but the beaten road will not take me where I want to go. What seems best to be done is this, to write mostly in rhyme, to slip into it rather than out of it, and then generally into some metre so strongly marked, as to leave the ear fully satisfied.

"One inference I think must be drawn from the obscurity of Pindar's metre,—that, be it what it may, the pleasure which it gave did not result from rhythm. Indeed, the whole system of classical metres seems to have been that of creating difficulty for the sake of overcoming it. We mis-read Sapphics without making them worse; we mis-read Pentameters and make them better; and the Hexameter remains the most perceptible of all measures, though in our pronunciation we generally distort four feet out of the six.

"A great deal more may be done with rhyme than has yet been done with it; there is a crypto-rhyme which may often be introduced with excellent effect; the eye has nothing to do with it, but the ear feels it without, perhaps, perceiving anything more than the general harmony, and not knowing how that harmony is produced. Sometimes the sparing intermixture of rhymes in a paragraph may be so managed as to satisfy the ear, and give greater effect to their after profusion. These are not things which one thinks of in composition, but they are thought of in correcting; they are the touches in finishing off, when a little alteration produces a great difference.

"Your dislike to the ballad metre is, perhaps, because you are sick of a tune which has been sung

so often and so badly. It is not incapable of dignity, but there is a sort of language that usually goes with it, and has the effect of making it so Kehama is pitched in too high a key for it; I shall weed out all uncouth lines, and leave the public nothing to abuse except the strangeness of the fable, which you may be sure will be plentifully abused. The mythology explains itself as it is introduced; yet because the names are not familiar, people will fancy there is a difficulty in understanding it. Sir William Jones has done nothing in introducing it so coldly and formally as he has done. They who read his poems do not remember them, and none but those who have read them can be expected to have even heard of my Divinities. But for popularity I care only as regards profit, and for profit only as regards subsistence. The praise of ten would have contented you; often have I said that you did not underrate the number of men whose praise was truly desirable. Ten thousand persons will read my book; if five hundred will promise to buy it, I shall be secure of all I want. You shall have it in large portions as fast it is written.

Yours,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To S. T. Coleridge, Esq.

"June 13. 1808.

"Dear Coleridge,

"I have the last census of Spain here, and perhaps you may like to give the Courier a statement of the

population of the Northern Provinces, as taken in 1797, and published in 1801.

		Population	Males from the Age of 16 to 50.
	Asturias	364,238	80,554
	Galicia	1,142,630	225,454
These Provinces are what we call Biscay.	Alava	67,523	15,367
	Guipuzcoa	104,491	23,343
	Vizcaya	111,436	25,801
			400,519

These are the provinces which have asked assistance; but there is probably a French force at Ferrol, which may, for awhile, keep part of Galicia in awe. The people are a hardy race, and most of them good shots, because there are no game laws, plenty of game, and wolves in the country. Probably every man has his gun. One hardly dares indulge a hope; but if Europe is to be redeemed in our days, you know it has always been my opinion that the work of deliverance would begin in Spain. And now that its unhappy government has committed suicide, the Spaniards have got rid of their worst enemy.

"This account of Lisbon, which has just reached me, may also fitly appear in the Courier, for the edification of Roscoe and such politicians:—'Every private family has a certain number of French officers and soldiers quartered upon them, who behave with their accustomed insolence and brutality. The ladies of one family very naturally, upon the intrusion of these unwelcome guests, retired to their own apartments, where they proposed remaining; but these civilised Frenchmen required their presence, and

would admit of no excuse. *Il faut que les dames viennent* was the only reply which they made; and of course the women were compelled to be subject to their ribaldry and impertinence. Whole families of the middling class are seen begging at the corners of the streets; and women, who had till now borne an unblemished reputation, prostitute themselves publicly to gain wherewithal to buy bread. The soldiers and the flower of the peasantry are sent to recruit the French armies in distant parts.' Nothing can exceed the misery and the despondency of the people.

"Were I minister, I would send half the regular army without delay to Spain; the distance is nothing,—a week would be but an average passage; and these seas are not like the German Ocean, where so many brave men have been sacrificed in useless expeditions during stormy seasons.

"Of public affairs enough! We have had a bilious fever in the house, which was epidemic among the children of the place. Herbert has suffered severely from it; I thought we should lose him. The disease has reduced him very much, and left him in a state of great debility. Keswick is scarcely ever without some kind of infectious fever, generally among the children. When these things get into a dirty house, they hardly ever get out of it; and I attribute this more to the want of cleanliness than to the climate. But ague is beginning to re-appear, which had scarcely been heard of during the last generation;—this is the case over the whole kingdom, I believe. What put a stop to it then, or what brought it back now, is beyond the reach of our present knowledge.

You love the science of physic; and Nature, who seems to have meant you for half a dozen different things when she made you, meant you for a physician among the rest. I will tell you, therefore, two odd peculiarities of my constitution; the slightest dose of laudanum acts upon me as an aperient; — if I am at any time exposed to the sun bareheaded for two minutes, I infallibly take cold. This probably shows how soon I should be subject to a stroke of the sun, and indicates the same over-susceptibility which the nitrous oxide did, a smaller dose affecting me than any other person who ever breathed it.

"I have read that play of Calderon's since my return: its story is precisely as you stated it, and in the story the wonder lies. Are we not apt to do with these things as naturalists do with insects? — put them in a microscope, and exclaim how beautiful! — how wonderful! — how grand! — when all the beauty and all the grandeur are owing to the magnifying medium? A shaping mind receives the story of the play and makes it *terrific*; — in Calderon it is *extravagant*. The machinery is certainly most extraordinary; and most extraordinary must the state of public opinion be, where such machinery could be received with the complacency of perfect faith, — as undoubtedly this was, and would be still in Spain.

"At last I have got all my books about me, and right rich I am in them — above 4000 volumes. With your Germans, &c., there is probably no other house in the country which contains such a collection of foreign literature. My Cid will be published in about six weeks. Brazil is not yet gone to press, —

the price of paper has deterred me; and yet there is little likelihood of any reduction, indeed no possibility, till the North is again open to us.

"This is the moment for uniting Spain and Portugal; and the greater facility of doing this in a commonwealth than in a monarchy would be reason enough for preferring that form of government were there no other. Portugal loses something in importance and in feeling by being incorporated in the Spanish monarchy; it would preserve its old dignity by uniting in a federal republic,—a form which the circumstances of Spain more especially require, and its provincial difference of laws and dialects. Each province should have its own cortes, and the general congress meet at Madrid,—otherwise, that city would soon waste away. No nation has ever had a fairer opportunity for reforming its government and modelling it anew. But I dare say this wretched cabinet will be meddling too much in this, and too little in the desperate struggle which must be made;—that we shall send tardy and inefficient aid—enough to draw on a heavier French force, and not enough to resist the additional force which it will occasion.

"The crown, like the Ahrimanes of the earth, will sacrifice any thing rather than see the downfal of royalty.

"That best of all good women, Mrs. Wilson, has borne the winter better than any former one since we have known her.

"I am thinking about a poem upon Pelajo, the restorer of Spain. Do you wish to serve me? Puff

Espriella, in the Courier, as the best guide to the lakes. All well. God bless you!

R. S."

To Mr. Neville White.

"Keswick, June 20. 1808.

"My dear Neville,

"The box arrived about an hour ago. Sir William Jones's works are placed opposite my usual seat, and on the most conspicuous shelf in the room. . . . . I have retired to my library to thank you for the most splendid set of books it contains. I thank you for them, Neville, truly and heartily; but do not let it hurt you if I say, that so costly a present gives me some pain as well as pleasure. Were you a rich man, you could not give me more books than I would joyfully accept, for I delight in accumulating such treasures as much as a miser does in keeping together gold; but, as things are at present, no proof was needed of your generous spirit, and, from the little you have to spare, I cannot but feel you are giving me too much. You will not be offended at my expressing this feeling, nor will you impute it to any unjust pride, which, blessed be God, I am too poor a man, and too wise a one, to be guilty of in any, even the smallest degree. Be assured that I shall ever value the books far more than if they had come from a wealthier donor, and that I write the donor's name in them with true respect and esteem. You will be pleased to hear they are

books of immediate use to me. Seven years ago I began a long poem which Sir William Jones, had he been living, would have liked to see, because it has the system of Hindoo mythology for its basis. I believe you heard me mention it at Mr. Hill's. I have been stimulated by the approbation of one of the few men living whose approbation could stimulate me, to go on with this poem, and am winning time for it by rising earlier than was my custom, because I will not allow any other part of the day to an employment less important than writing history, and far less profitable than that of writing any thing else, how humble or how worthless soever. In the hours thus fairly won for the purpose I get on steadily and well. Now, though I had long ago gone through those works of Sir William, and made from them such extracts as were necessary for my purpose, it was still very desirable that I should have them at hand. Lord Teignmouth's Life also is new to me.

"I have not seen the Scotch review of Marmion, but I have heard that on its appearance, Walter Scott showed Jeffrey the letter in which I had refused to bear a part in his review. . . . . I do not know whether Scott may have shown him another letter, in which I spoke of the 'Remains.' Scott may perhaps review them himself, unless this affair of Marmion, or, what is more likely, their utter and irreconcileable difference of political opinion, should make him withdraw from the journal altogether.

"Henceforward we shall have little business to write about. You may supply the place by telling

me of what you read, and I may sometimes be able to direct you to books which will supply farther, or perhaps better, information upon the subjects which interest you: and sometimes save you time in acquiring knowledge, by telling you the shortest and nearest road to it. God bless you!

R. SOUTHEY."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"July, 1808.

"My dear Rickman,

"I very much wish you were here. You may have heard that there is an island which sometimes comes up in this lake, and, after awhile, goes down again. Five years have I been expecting this appearance, and now, sure enough, it is above water. It may stay there for some weeks, — sometimes six or eight, — it may already have sunk. But Davy *ought* to put himself in the first mail-coach; and perhaps curiosity may induce you to expedite your journey for the sake of seeing the oddest thing you are ever likely to see.

"How it is effected is for Davy to discover; but as much of the bottom of the lake as is equal to the area of your house has been forced up to the surface in several pieces, and in other parts you plainly see that there are rents in the bottom where parts have sunk in, for it is not a deep part of the lake. The gas which follows the immersion of a pole stinks, and over one part of the water a thin steam was plainly

discernible when I was there. As no person was there when it rose, we cannot tell whether it was accompanied by any great agitation of the water, or any noise; but the noise, if any, cannot have been very great, or it would have been heard here. It is possible that the cause may have some connection with the sulphureous springs in the neighbourhood, almost certain that it is the same which occasions our bottom winds.*

"A Portuguese sermon has just helped me to a discovery which will amuse you. Who was the first man that doubled the Cape of Good Hope? The prophet Jonah. Examine his track in the whale, and this proves to be the case; and you will observe that this magnifies the miracle prodigiously, for what a passage he had from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf!

"My friends the Spaniards and Portuguese are justifying the opinion which I have long given of them to the astonishment of those who heard me. Bonaparte will, I suppose, pour in upon them with his whole force; so let him. You know how little respect I have for what is called the spirit of history, or the philosophy of history, by those people who want to have everything given them in extracts and essences; but the truth of the present history is, that a great military despotism, in its youth and full vigour—like that of France—will and must beat down corrupt establishments and worn-out govern-

* The floating island still appears at intervals. There is said to be a bottom wind, when the lake is violently agitated without any disturbance in the atmosphere—a phenomenon which does not seem yet to have been satisfactorily accounted for.

ments, but that it cannot beat down a true love of liberty, and a true spirit of patriotism, unless there be an overwhelming superiority of physical force, — which is not the case here. . . . . In Spain the fire has burst out which will consume. Well done! my friend William Bryan the Prophet: you certainly did prophesy to me in St. Stephen's court concerning Spain as truly as Francis Moore did, in his almanack last year, concerning the Grand Turk.

. . . . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Richard Duppa, Esq.

"Keswick, July 11. 1808.

"Dear Duppa,

"The thought of writing to you, — or, rather, the thought that I had not written, — has very often risen in my conscience heavily. Joanna Southcote has been the cause. Her books, with Sharp's dirty treasure, are now on their way to London. It is so much better to say I *have done* a thing than I *will do* it, that I really have deferred writing for the sake of saying these books were actually gone.

"For the last three weeks I have suffered from a blinding and excoriating catarrh; always with me a very obstinate disease, and more violent than I have ever seen it in any person except one of my own family. Diseases are the worst things a man can

inherit, and I am never likely to inherit anything else. That father's brother of mine in Somersetshire—whom I would so gladly sell at half price—received me as cordially as was in his nature last April, and gave me 25*l.*,—an act of great generosity in a man of 1200*l.* a year, and remarkable as being all I ever have had, or ever shall have, from him, for he has now turned his sister out of doors, and desired never to see any of the family again. Duppa, my breeches' pockets will never be so full as to make me stick in Heaven's gate. Three lines of that fellow's pen will cut me off from more than all the pens I shall ever wear to the stump will gain for me, and yet I hope many is the goose egg yet unlaid which is to produce quills for my service.

"The Lakers are coming in shoals, and some of them find their way here. Among others, I have had the satisfaction of seeing Joanna Baillie: she drank tea with us, and very much pleased we were with her,—as good-natured, unaffected, and sensible a woman as I have ever seen.

"A month ago you might, perhaps, have been gratified by knowing what were my thoughts of the state of Spain; now, I suppose, everybody thinks alike. But I have always said that, if the deliverance of Europe were to take place in our days, there was no country in which it was so likely to begin as Spain; and this opinion, whenever I expressed it, was received with wonder, if not with incredulity. But there is a spirit of patriotism, a glowing and proud remembrance of the past, a generous shame for the present, and a living hope for the future, both in

the Spaniards and Portuguese, which convinced me that the heart of the country was sound, and that those nations are likely to rise in the scale, perhaps, Duppa, when we are sunk. Not that England will sink yet, but there is more public virtue in Spain than in any other country under Heaven. I have no fears nor doubts concerning that country; the spirit of liberty is not to be extinguished! nothing but that spirit could possibly check the progress of Bonaparte; this will check, and, it is my firm conviction, eventually destroy him. William Bryan prophesied a happy termination in Spain when I saw him in London, and I dare say, if ever we meet again, he will not fail to remind me of it. I expect his corrected copy of Espriella with some curiosity.

"God bless you!

Yours,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To John Adamson, Esq.

"Keswick, Aug. 6. 1808.

"Sir.

"I have never seen the name of Nicola Luiz, except in Murphy; and the title of the Portuguese Plautus which he gives him, being generally applied to Gil Vicente, thought it not unlikely that he might have written Richard for Robert, as he is apt to do so. Barbosa's great Bibliotheca is not in my possession, and I have referred in vain to Nicolas Antonio, to the Mappa de Portugal, which contains a

copious list of poets, and to the Catalogue of Authors which the Academy printed as the sources from which their dictionary was to be compiled. How it should be that this name is not to be found in either, is to me altogether unaccountable.

"It is possible that Antonio Ferreira's play may have been originally published under this fictitious name. I have no other reason for supposing so than that it seems almost certain if the name of Nicola Luiz were a real one, it would have been included in one or all of the works which I have consulted; and Ferreira did in one instance practise an artifice of this kind, yet I think you must have seen his play. It begins: —

> 'Colhey, colhey alegres,
> Donzellas minhas, mil cheirosas flores.'

Should this be the tragedy in question, I will, with great pleasure, transmit you an account of the author, or send you my copy of his works (should that be more agreeable), which, when you have completely done with it, may be returned through my brother Dr. Southey, of Durham.

"The tragedy of Domingos dos Reis Quita, upon the same story, has been Englished by Benjamin Thompson. There are two Spanish ones by Geronimo Bermudez (published originally under the name of Antonio de Silva), in the sixth volume of the Parnaso Español. Henry K. White had merely begun the first scene of his projected play, and that, as was evident from the handwriting, at a very early age.

"The Portuguese have two poems upon the same story, the Penasco de las Lagrimas, written in Spanish by Francisco de França da Costa, and the Saudades de D. Ignes de Castro, by Manoel de Azevedo. This latter I have myself planned a play upon, The Revenge of Pedro: whether it will ever be executed, is very doubtful, but this part of the story is far fitter for dramatic poetry than the foregoing.

I am, Sir,

Yours with respect,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To John Adamson, Esq.

"Aug. 12. 1808.

"Dear Sir,

"I thank you for your translation, and will, by the first carrier, send off the plays of Ferreira and Quita, and the Saudades.

"You have mistaken the meaning of *Xarifalte.* Portuguese orthography is very loose in any but modern authors, and it is sometimes necessary to hunt a word through every possible mutation of labial or guttural letters. Under gérafalte it is to be found, which is the ger-falcon of our ancestors.

"The story of Iñez is, in any point of view, sufficiently atrocious, but the poets have not been true to history. It is expressly asserted by Fernan Lopez, that Pedro denied his marriage during his father's life, and never affirmed it till some years afterwards: what is still worse, that Affonso repeatedly asked him

if she were his wife, and said that if she were he would acknowledge her as such. I am myself decidedly of opinion that she was not. The arguments against the fact of the marriage which Joam das Regas used at the election of King Joam I., are to me as satisfactory as those which he brought against its legality, if the fact had been proved, would have been in these days. I am sorry, also, to disbelieve the coronation of the dead body: there is not a word of it in the Chronicler, though he fully describes its removal from Coimbra, and the Portuguese nobles were not men who would have submitted to such a ceremony.

"If your play be of modern date, Nicola Luiz is probably a modern author, and that removes all difficulty concerning him. There was a tragedy upon the same subject, published by Dr. Simmonds about ten years ago, which obtained considerable praise.

"Your translation, I dare say, does justice to the original; had it been still unprinted, I would have noticed a few instances in which the proper names are mis-accented. What pleases me best in the play is to perceive that the author has avoided the fault of Camoens, and not made his heroine talk about Hyrcanian tigers, and such other commonplaces which pass current for passion and for poetry.

"I have seen the Fonte das Lagrimas; Link omits to mention that two beautiful cedars brush its surface with their boughs. I have also seen the tombs of Iñez and Pedro; they are covered with bas-relief, which ought to be accurately copied and engraved.

"There is a shocking story of one of the children of Iñez,—the Infant D. Joam, who murdered his wife; it is a worse story than even the murder of his mother. If at any time chance should bring you this way, I shall have great pleasure in showing you all those facts of Portuguese history relating to your subject, which have occurred to me in the course of long and laborious employment upon the history and literature of Portugal.

I am, Sir,
Yours respectfully,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Lieutenant Southey, H. M. S. Dreadnought.

"Aug. 16. 1808.

"My dear Tom,

"—— is gone to Spain! to fight as a private in the Spanish army, and he has found two Englishmen to go with him. A noble fellow! This is something like the days of old, as we poets and romancers represent them;—something like the best part of chivalry: old honours, old generosity, old heroism, are reviving, and the cancer of that nation is stopped, I believe and fully trust, now and for ever. A man like —— cannot long remain without command; and, of all things in this world, I should most rejoice to hear that King Joseph had fallen into his hands;—he would infallibly hang him on the nearest tree, first, as a Bonaparte by blood; secondly, as a Frenchman by adoption; thirdly, as a king by trade.

"Miss Seward's criticism has appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine. Her verses have not been inserted in the Courier, which is rather odd. She reads Madoc to all her acquaintance, and must be the means of selling several copies.

"Another island came up on Saturday last, which I shall visit the first fine day,—probably with Jackson and Jonathan Ottley, who is going to measure it and catch a bottle of the gas, Jonathan being, as you know, our Keswick philosopher. We are now having a spell of wind and rain.

"We have got the prettiest kitten you ever saw, —a dark tabby,—and we have christened her by the heathenish name of Dido. You would be very much diverted to see her hunt Herbert all round the kitchen, playing with his little bare feet, which she just pricks at every pat, and the faster he moves back the more she paws them, at which he cries 'Naughty Dido!' and points to his feet and says, 'Hurt, hurt, naughty Dido.' Presently he feeds her with comfits, which Dido plays with awhile, but soon returns to her old game. You have lost the amusing part of Herbert's childhood,—just when he is trying to talk, and endeavouring to say every thing.

". . . . . I have been in the water very seldom since you went; but the last time I accomplished the great job of fairly swimming on my back, which is a step equal to that of getting one's first commission.

"I hope that the opening of Pelayo is pretty well arranged, but I will not begin upon it till I come to

a stop in Kehama. You will not, perhaps, be surprised to hear that two of my old dreams are likely to be introduced, with powerful effect, in this poem, — good proof that it was worth while to keep even the imperfect register that I have. The fear is, that what happened to Nebuchadnezzar is perpetually happening to me. I forget my dreams, and have no Daniel to help out my recollection; and if by chance I do remember them, unless they are instantly written down, the impression passes away almost as lightly as the dream itself. Do you remember the story of Mickle the poet, who always regretted that he could not remember the poetry which he composed in his sleep? it was, he said, so infinitely superior to any thing which he produced in his waking hours. One morning he awoke and repeated the lamentation over his unhappy fortune, that he should compose such sublime poetry, and yet lose it for ever! 'What!' said his wife, who happened to be awake, 'were you writing poetry?' 'Yes,' he replied, 'and such poetry that I would give the world to remember it.' 'Well then,' said she, 'I did luckily hear the last lines, and I am sure I remember them exactly: they were—

"By Heaven, I'll wreak my woes
Upon the cowslip and the pale prim-rose."

This is one of Sharpe's stories,—it is true, and an excellently good one it is. I am not such a dreamer as Mickle, for what I can remember is worth remembering, — and one of the wildest scenes in Kehama will prove this. God bless you!

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Aug. 16. 1808.

"Are you not half ready to suspect, Grosvenor, that I have foresworn letter writing? I write as seldom to any of my friends as I do to you; and yet letters of business and of common courtesy accumulate upon me so fast, that they occasion a very considerable, and even inconvenient, expense of time; especially to a man who, in the summer, is troubled with an influenza called laziness, and all the year round with the much more troublesome disease of poverty.

"It is not to be told how I rejoice at seeing my friends the Spaniards and Portuguese proving themselves to the eyes of the world to be what I have so long said they were. Huzza! Santiago and St. George! Smite them, as my Cid said, for the love of charity.

"Grosvenor! the most deserving of His Majesty's pensioners thinketh of his pension, — it is low water with him.

"Have you seen a defence, or rather eulogium, of Madoc, in the last Gentleman's Magazine, by Miss Seward? who preaches up its praise wherever she goes.

"You will have the Cid in about a fortnight. The translations in the appendix are by Frere, and they are, without any exception, the most masterly I have seen. The introduction, to be what it ought to be, and what I could have made it, would have required

a volume to itself, for my reading is far more extensive on these subjects than almost any person can suppose. It is a rapid sketch, — just sufficient to introduce the Chronicle, by giving the reader a summary view of the previous history and present state of Spain. The Chronicle is well done; and the translation improves so much on the original, by incorporating matter from other sources, as to be unique in its kind. There is a good deal of miscellaneous matter brought together in the notes. The intrinsic value of the work is of a very high order. Romance has nothing finer than all the proceedings at Zamora, and poetry nothing superior to the living pictures which you will find everywhere. The Cid's speech at the cortes is perfect eloquence of its kind. If it be remembered that all this was written in all probability before the year 1200 (certainly within half a century sooner or later), I think it must be considered as one of the most curious and valuable specimens of early literature, — certainly as the most beautiful, beyond all comparison.

"Tom has been lucky in his admiralty appointment, being first in a flag-ship, the Dreadnought. He says, and very justly, that our troops to Spain might have been conveyed in half the time, at half the expense, and without any risk at all, by putting as many on board some of our large ships of war as they could take (800 or 1000 they could carry very well), and letting each ship make the best of her way to the port nearest the scene of action. A convoy may be wind-bound for months, and any single transport which parts company would fall to the first

privateer, whereas a ship of the line could beat down, take advantage of every start of wind, and defy all upon the ocean. There is very good sense in this. But transports imply jobs, and every thing must be a job in England.

"Farewell! I am getting on with S. America.

"My son is the oddest fellow in the world: I wish you could see his bright eyes. . . . . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"September 9. 1808.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"Had I been a single man, I should long ere this have found my way into Spain.* I do not perceive any possibility of my going now,—for this plain reason, my pension would not support my family during my absence, and there is no reason to suppose that any salary which might be allotted me, would be more than sufficient for my own expenses abroad. So much the better, for if it were otherwise, and the offer were made me, I believe I ought to accept it, and this could not be done without a great sacrifice. Three children, and a fourth in prospect, are not easily left, and ought not to be left unless some important

* This letter was in reply to one from Mr. Bedford, conveying an offer from Gifford to endeavour to procure him an appointment in Spain, that he might write an account of the transactions then going forward there.

advantage were to be obtained by leaving them. I am obliged to Gifford, very much obliged to him: it is likely that Frere, from his knowledge of my Uncle, would be disposed to listen to him; but that enough could be obtained to render my acceptance of it prudent, or even practicable, seems out of the question.

"So far was written last night, immediately on the receipt of your letter. In matters of any import this is my way,—to reply from the instantaneous feeling, and then let the reply lie quietly for cooler judgment. You see what my thoughts are upon the subject. I should accept an advantageous offer, but am so certain of being desperately homesick during the whole time of absence, that I am glad there is so little probable chance of any offer sufficiently advantageous. Yet had I 500*l.* to dispose of, I would go in the first packet for Lisbon, expressly to purchase books. The French have, without doubt, sold off the convent libraries, and perhaps the public ones, and such a collection may now be made, as could never at any other time be within reach.

"As for a history of the Spanish Revolution, Landor is in the country, and if he is disposed to do it, there never was that man upon earth who could do it better.

"God bless you

R. S."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Keswick, Sept. 13. 1808.

"My dear Rickman,

"Your estimate of Spain is right.* The difference between our age and that of Elizabeth is, that the bulk of the people are better in no respect, and worse in some. The middle clâsses are veneered instead of being heart of oak, and the higher ones are better classics, and worse in every other possible point of view. Ours is a degrading and dwarfing system of society. I believe, as you do, that the Spaniards have displayed more spirit than we should have done, and that the peacemongers were ready to have sacrificed the honour of England for their looms and brewhouses; yet in the end we should have beaten France. Religion has done much for Spain; in what light I regard it, you will see by the introduction to the Cid written six years ago, and only re-modelled now, and that before these late events took place. But much has also been done by those awakening recollections of the deeds of their forefathers, which every Spaniard felt and delighted to feel. The very ballads of the Cid must have had their effect.

. . . . . .

"I am very idle; boating and walking about, and laying in health and exercise for the next season of hybernation. Right glad shall I be when you come

* "I do not know whether you allow credit to my opinion that the Spanish resistance is all from religion. . . . . You know I reckon the state of Spain to be about like that of England under Elizabeth and James the First . . . . .—*J. R. to R. S., Sept.* 10. 1808.

and help me in this laudable and needful part of my year's work. The last odd thing that has turned up in my reading is, that the Merino sheep were originally English, and transported from hence into Spain; *ergo*, the quality of the wool depends upon the climate and pasture, and a few generations may be expected to bring it back to what it originally was. . . . . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Lieut. Southey, H. M. S. Dreadnought.

"Greta Hall, Oct. 13. 1808.

"Dear Tom,

"An Irishman who was abroad, came in one day and said that he had seen that morning what he had never seen before,—a fine crop of anchovies growing in the garden. 'Anchovies?' said an Englishman, with a half laugh and a tone of wonder. And from this the other, according to the legitimate rules of Irish logic, deduced a quarrel, a challenge, and a duel, in which the poor Englishman, who did not believe that anchovies grew in the garden, was killed on the spot. The moment he fell, the right word came into the challenger's head. 'Och! what a pity!' he cried, 'and I meant capers all the while!' Mr. Spence knew the parties, and told this story the other day at Calvert's, from whence it travelled to me.

"What, think you, was announced the other day

in the Keswick play-bill? A tale in verse, by R. Southy, Esq., to be recited by Mr. Deans. There's fame for you! What the tale was I have not heard: most likely the Maid of the Inn, which is right worthy of such recitation.

"It occurred to me last night, I know not how, that I have never, to the best of my recollection, seen one of the large house-snails in this country, and very few indeed of the smaller kind, which are so numerous, and of such beautiful varieties in our part of the kingdom. You know what a collector of snail shells I was in my time, hoarding up all the empty ones I could find. The rocks used to be my hunting place. That amusement has made me familiar with every variety in that neighbourhood, and certain I am that the greater number are not to be found here. Slugs we have in plenty. By the by, I have lately seen it mentioned in an old French book, that frogs eat snails, shells and all.

"I wish you had the Cid to have shown the Spaniards; they would have been pleased to see that the Campeador was beginning to have his fame here in England, 700 years after his death. Unquestionably that Chronicle is one of the finest things in the world; and so I think it will be admitted to be. Coleridge is perfectly delighted with it. Frere, passionately as he admired the poem, had never seen the Chronicle, which is remarkable enough. You will see, by comparing the Dumb-ee scene in both, that the Chronicle is sometimes the most poetical of the two.* I am so fond of this kind of contemporary his-

* Cid, Book ix. c. xiii.

tory, and so persuaded of the good which it is likely to do, by giving us a true knowledge of other times, and reviving those high and generous feelings which all modern habits of life tend to counteract, that I think seriously of translating the works of Fernan Lopez as soon as my history is completed. There is the Chronicle of Pedro the Just, which is a very small volume, my great MS., and the Chronicle of Joam I. The whole would fill three such quartos as the Cid. I should like to do it for the pleasure of the thing,—as the man said when he was to shoot Shepherd's goat. . . . . .

"I am getting on with my Letters from Portugal. The evenings close in by tea-time, and fire and candle bring with them close work at the desk, and nothing to take me from it. The Long-man of the Row recommends the small size in preference to quarto, as producing greater profits, in consequence of its readier sale. To this I willingly assent. They will probably extend to three such volumes as Espriella. When they are done, the fresh letters of Espriella will come in their turn; and so I go on. Huzza! two and twenty volumes already; the Cid, when reprinted, will make two more; and, please God, five a year in addition as long as I live.

"Edith has just been in with her kiss—as regular as the evening gun. She wants to know when Uncle will come home. Sooner perhaps than he himself thinks, for the glorious revolution in Spain will bring Bonaparte down. It is morally impossible that such a nation can be subdued. If King Joseph should fall into their hands, I pray that —— may

be on the spot; he will take care that no mischief shall happen by keeping him prisoner.

. . . . . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Mr. Ebenezer Elliott.

"October 13. 1808.

"Sir,

"A recommendation to the booksellers to look at a manuscript is of no use whatever. In the way of business they glance at every thing which is offered them; and no persons know better what is likely to answer their purpose. Poetry is the worst article in the market; — out of fifty volumes which may be published in the course of a year, not five pay the expense of publication: and this is a piece of knowledge which authors in general purchase dearly, for in most cases these volumes are printed at their risk.

"From that specimen of your productions which is now in my writing desk, I have no doubt that you possess the feeling of a poet, and may distinguish yourself; but I am sure that premature publication would eventually discourage you. You have an example in Kirke White; — his Clifton Grove sold only to the extent of the subscription he obtained for it; and the treatment which it experienced drove him, by his own account, almost to madness. My advice to you is, to go on improving yourself, without hazarding any thing: you cannot practise without improvement. Feel your way before you with

the public, as Montgomery did. He sent his verses to the newspapers; and when they were copied from one to another it was a sure sign they had succeeded. He then communicated them, as they were copied from the papers, to the Poetical Register; the Reviews selected them for praise; and thus, when he published them in a collected form, he did nothing more than claim, in his own character, the praise which had been bestowed upon him under a fictitious name. Try the newspapers. Send what you think one of your best short poems (that is, any thing short of 100 lines) to the Courier or the Globe. If it is inserted send others, with any imaginary signature. If they please nobody, and nobody notices them for praise, nobody will for censure, and you will escape all criticism. If, on the contrary, they attract attention, the editor will be glad to pay you for more,—and they still remain your property, to be collected and reprinted in whatever manner you may think best hereafter.

"If, however, you are bent upon trying your fortune with the Soldier's Love, can you not try it by subscription? 250 names will indemnify you for the same number of copies. I will give you a fair opinion of your manuscript if you will direct Longman to forward it to me, and will willingly be of what little use I can. But be assured that the best and wisest plan you can pursue is, to try your strength in the London newspapers.

Believe me,

With the best wishes for your welfare and success,

Yours sincerely,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Humphrey Senhouse, Esq.

"Keswick, Oct. 15. 1808.

"My dear Sir,

"I have had a visit this morning from S—— and C—— upon the subject of this convention in Portugal. They, and some of their friends, are very desirous of bringing before the country, in some regular form, the main iniquity of the business, — which has been lost sight of in all the addresses, — and of rectifying public opinion by showing it in its true light.* A military inquiry may or may not convict Sir Hugh Dalrymple of military misconduct. This is the least part of his offence, and no legal proceedings can attach to the heinous crime he has committed; the high treason against all moral feeling, in recognising Junot by his usurped title, and deadening that noble spirit from which, and which only, the redemption of Europe can possible proceed, — by presuming to grant stipulations for the Portuguese which no government ever pretended to have power to make for an independent ally, — covenanting for the impunity of the traitors, and guaranteeing the safety of an

* The feeling of the country seems to have been more generally roused on this occasion than almost on any other: — "The London newspapers joined in one cry of wonder and abhorrence. On no former occasion had they been so unanimous, and scarcely ever was their language so energetic, so manly, so worthy of the English press. The provincial papers proved that from one end of the island to the other the resentment of this grievous wrong was the same. Some refused to disgrace their pages by inserting so infamous a treaty; others surrounded it with broad black lines, putting their journal into mourning for the dismal information it contained."—*Edinburgh Annual Register*, 1808, p. 368.

army of ruffians, all of whom, without his intervention, must soon have received their righteous reward from the hands of those whom they had oppressed. He has stepped in to save these wretches from the vengeance of an injured people: he has been dealing with them as fair and honourable enemies, exchanging compliments and visits, dining with them in the palaces from which they had driven the rightful lords, and upon the plate which they had stolen. He, therefore, has abandoned our vantage ground, betrayed the cause of Spain and Portugal, and disclaimed, as far as his authority extends, the feelings which the Spaniards are inculcating, and in which lie their strength and their salvation, by degrading into a common and petty war between soldier and soldier, that which is the struggle of a nation against a foreign usurper, a business of natural life and death, a war of virtue against vice, light against darkness, the good principle against the evil one.

"It is important to make the country feel this; and these sentiments would appear with most effect if they were embodied in a county address, of which the ostensible purport might be to thank his Majesty for having instituted an inquiry, and to request that he would be pleased to appoint a day of national humiliation for this grievous national disgrace. This will not be liable to the reproof with which he thought proper to receive the city address, because it prejudges nothing, — military proceedings are out of the question: what is complained of is, a breach of the law of nations, and an abandonment of the moral principle which the words of the convention

prove, and which cannot be explained away by any inquiry whatsoever.

. . . . . .

S—— and C—— know many persons who will come forward at such a meeting. Coleridge or Wordsworth will be ready to speak, and will draw up resolutions to be previously approved, and brought forward by some proper person. We will prepare the way by writing in the county papers. Here ends my part of the business, and not a little surprised am I to find myself even thus much concerned in any county affairs, when the sole freehold I am ever likely to possess is a tenement, six feet by three, in Crosthwaite churchyard.

. . . . . .

Believe me,
Yours very truly,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Walter Scott, Esq.

"Keswick, Nov. 6. 1808.

"My dear Scott,

"I have sometimes thought of publishing transtions from the Spanish and Portuguese, with the originals annexed, but there was no prospect of profit to tempt me; and as certainly, if I live, it is my intention to enter fully into the literary history of both countries. That made me lay aside the

thought of any thing on a lesser scale. Another reason, perhaps, may have been this, that it is not more difficult to compose poetry than to translate it, and that, in my own opinion, I can make as good as I can find. Very, very few of the Spanish ballads are good; they are made in general upon one receipt, and that a most inartificial one; they begin by describing the situation of somebody who makes a speech which is the end. Nothing like the wildness or the character of our ballads is to be found among them. It is curious, and at present inexplicable to me, how their prose should be so exquisitely poetical as it is in the Cid, and their poetry so completely prosaical as it is in their narrative poems. Nevertheless, I might be tempted. Some translations I have by me, and many of my books are marked for others. There are some high-toned odes in the Spanish, and a good many beautiful sonnets. Many of their epics would afford good extracts; and I am competent to give critical sketches of biography, formed not at second-hand, but from full perusal of the authors themselves. My name, however, is worth nothing in the market, and the booksellers would not offer me any thing to make it worth my while to interrupt occupations of greater importance. I thank you heartily for your offer of aid, and should the thing be carried into effect, would gladly avail myself of it.

"I am planning something of great importance, a poem upon Pelayo, the first restorer of Spain: it has long been one of my chosen subjects; and those late

events which have warmed every heart that has right British blood circulating through it, have revived and strengthened old resolutions. It will be in regular blank verse, and the story will naturally take rather a higher tone than Madoc.

"It gives me great pleasure to hear that you have done with the Edinburgh Review. Of their article respecting Spain, I heard from Coleridge. That subject is a fair touchstone whether a man has any generous sympathies in his nature. There is not in history such another instance of national regeneration and redemption. I have been a true prophet upon this subject, and am not a little proud of the prophecy. Of the eventual issue I have never felt a moment's doubt. Such a nation, such a spirit, are invincible. But what a cruel business has this convention of Cintra been. Junot clearly expressed his own feelings of our commander-in-chief when he recommended him to take up his quarters at Quintella's house as he had done: "the man," he said, "kept a very good table, and he had seldom had reason to find fault with it." My blood boils to think that there should be an English general to whom this rascal could venture to say this! In one of the Frenchmen's knapsacks, among other articles of that property which they bargained to take away with them, was a delicate female hand with rings upon the fingers.

"Our ministers do not avail themselves as they might do of their strong cause. They should throw away the scabbard and publish a manifesto, stating why this country never will make peace with Bona-

parte, and on what plain terms it will at any moment make peace with France under any other ruler. I fully believe that it would be possible to overthrow his government by this means at this time.

"A reviewal of my Cid by you will be the best aid that it can possibly receive. Five hundred only were printed, and in spite of the temporary feeling and the wonderful beauty of the book, I dare say they will hang upon hand.

"It will rejoice me to see you here, and show you my treasures, and talk of the days of the shield and the lance. We have a bed at your service, and shall expect you to be our guest. Wordsworth, who left me to-day, desires his remembrances. He is about to write a pamphlet upon this precious convention, which he will place in a more philosophical point of view than any body has yet done. I go to press in a few weeks with my History of Brazil, and have Thalaba at present in Ballantyne's hands — that poem having just reached the end of its seven years' apprenticeship. And I have got half way through my Hindoo poem, which, it is to be hoped, will please myself, inasmuch as it is not likely to please anybody else. It is too strange, too much beyond all human sympathies; but I shall go on, and as, in such a case, I have usually little but my labour for my pains, the certainty that it never can be popular will not deter me from gratifying my own fancy.

"Mrs. Southey joins me in remembrances to Mrs. Scott.

Believe me,

Yours very truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

The autumn of this year was marked by a circumstance which exercised considerable influence over my father's future literary labours — the setting on foot of the Quarterly Review, in which, up to the last few years of his life, he bore so constant and prominent a part. At this time the Edinburgh Review had the field all to itself; and though it had commenced upon principles of "neutrality," or something of the kind as to party politics *, its "Whiggery" had gradually increased until it had become of the deepest dye. We have seen that in the preceding year Sir Walter Scott (at that time himself a contributor) had endeavoured also to enlist my father under its banners, with what success the reply has shown. *Now* he had not only himself withdrawn his aid, but also his name from the subscribers' list †, so highly did he disapprove of the political tone it had assumed: and viewing the matter as one of great importance from its large circulation (9000 copies being then printed quarterly), from there being no periodical to compete with it in literary criticism, and from the impression which the "flashy and bold character of the work" was likely to make upon youthful minds, he was especially desirous that some counteracting influence should be established. In him therefore the idea originated. The first intimation of it my father received was from his friend Mr. Bedford, who was intimately acquainted with Gifford, the appointed future editor, and who, knowing how decidedly he was opposed to the principles advocated in the Edin-

* See Life of Sir Walter Scott, 2d Edit., vol. iii. p. 65.

† Ibid. 126—129.

burgh, especially as respected "the base and cowardly spirit with which they set forth the invincible power of France, and the necessity of sacrificing every thing that is dear and honourable to obtain her forbearance," now wrote to him, giving him an account of the plan upon which it was proposed to conduct this Review, and wishing him to draw up an account of the affairs of Spain for the first number. His reply was as follows: —

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, Nov. 9. 1808.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"I am ready, desirous, and able to bear a part in this said Review. You will, however, think it odd, that the very subject on which you think me most able, is one which I should rather avoid. I have not the sort of talent requisite for writing a political pamphlet upon the state of Spain; these things require a kind of wire-drawing which I have never learnt to perform, and a method of logical reasoning to which my mind has never been habituated, and for which it has no natural aptitude. What I feel about Spain you know; what I think about it is this, — the country has much to suffer, in all probability there will be many and dreadful defeats of the patriots, and such scenes as have never been witnessed in Europe since the destruction of Saguntum and Numantia may perhaps be renewed there. Joseph will very likely be crowned at Madrid, and many of

us may give up the cause of Spanish independence as lost. But so surely as God liveth, and as the spirit of God liveth and moveth in the hearts of men, so surely will that country eventually work out its own redemption.

"Now Grosvenor, understand me clearly. I could not fill half a score of pages by dilating and diluting this—that is, I should be a sorry pamphleteer; but I believe myself to be a good reviewer in my own way, which is that of giving a succinct account of the contents of the book before me, extracting its essence, bringing my own knowledge to bear upon the subject, and, where occasion serves, seasoning it with those opinions which in some degree leaven all my thoughts, words, and actions. If you had read the Annual Reviews, you would comprehend this better by example than I can make you in a letter. Voyages and travels I review better than anything else, being well read in that branch of literature; better, indeed, than most men. Biography and history are within my reach; upon any of these topics I will do my best . . . . . You know my way of thinking upon most subjects. I despise all parties too much to be attached to any. I believe that this country must continue the war while Bonaparte is at the head of France, and while the system which he has perfected remains in force; I therefore, from my heart and soul, execrate and abominate the peace-mongers. I am an enemy to any further concessions to the Catholics; I am a friend to the Church establishment. I wish for reform, because I cannot but see that all things are tending towards revolu-

tion, and nothing but reform can by any possibility prevent it.

"Thus much is said to you that it may be said through you. To yourself I add that the pay proposed will be exceedingly suitable to my poor finances, and that the more books of travels they send me the better. I had almost forgotten to say, that if a fit text be sent me, the subject of converting the Hindoos is one upon which I am well prepared.

"Farewell, and God bless you!

R. S."

Very shortly after the date of this letter some further doubts crossed my father's mind, as to the projected Review being sufficiently independent in its politics for him to contribute to it with perfect satisfaction. The circumstance of there being reason to expect "political information to be communicated from authentic sources," seemed to him to imply that silence would be observed on such points as it might be unpleasing to the ministry to have strongly animadverted upon, and he consequently expresses these fears to Mr. Bedford in the strong language he naturally used to a familiar correspondent. This produced a further exposition of the principles upon which the Review was to be conducted; and his reply will show, that notwithstanding these passing doubts, he entered at the first heartily and zealously into the plan.

It is however right to state, that at no period could the Quarterly Review be said *fairly* to represent my father's opinions, political or otherwise, and great

injustice was often done him both by imputing articles to him which he never wrote, and also by supposing that, in those known to be his, *all* his mind had appeared. The truth was, as his letters will show, that his views on most subjects, while from this time they gradually drew nearer to those of the Tory party, yet occasionally differed widely from them, and most certainly were never those of a blind, time-serving, and indiscriminating allegiance. In his contributions to the Quarterly Review these differences of opinion were broadly stated, and measures often recommended of a very different character to those which that party adopted. This might be, and probably was, sometimes done in a manner which admitted, and, perhaps, required, the editor's correction; but it would seem that Gifford had a heavy and unsparing hand in these matters, and my father frequently and bitterly complains of the mutilation of his papers, and of their being tamed down to the measure of the politics the Review was intended to represent, and gauged often by ministerial timidity. This, it appears, from the following letter, he apprehended would sometimes be the case, but *not* to the extent to which it was subsequently carried.

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Nov. 17. 1808.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"You have taken what I said a little too seriously; that is, you have given it more thought than it de-

served. The case stands thus: you wish to serve the public, ministers wish to serve themselves; and so it happens that, just at this time, the two objects are the same. I am very willing to travel with them as far as we are going the same way, and, when our roads separate, shall of course leave them. Meantime, that suppression which there certainly will be upon certain points is of little consequence to me, who shall have nothing to do with those points. Murray has sent me materials for the missionary article, in which Gifford wishes me to enter upon the subject generally. My intent was to have confined myself to the Hindoo question; but I am master of the whole subject, and will therefore take the wider view. There are three reviewals of mine upon this very topic in the three first Annuals, and these were the first which ever appeared concerning them. I am strong here, and shall do well, God willing; yet how much better could I do if nobody but Robert Southey were responsible for the opinions expressed.

"I know from Walter Scott that he reviews the Cid; it is not a text for entering directly upon the present Spanish affairs, though a fine one for *touching* upon them. Two things are required for the review of that book which will not be found in one person—a knowledge of Spanish literature, and of the manners of chivalry, so as to estimate the comparative value of my Chronicle. The latter knowledge Scott possesses better than any body else.

"About Cevallos you best know your own stock of materials. Authors may be divided into silk-

worms and spiders,—those who spin because they are full, and those who spin because they are empty. It is not likely that there are any facts of importance which are not known to the public; and, indeed, if I undertook the task, I should have little to do with the past history of *these* transactions, but state as summarily and strongly as I could what the conduct of France had been; hold up the war as a crusade on the part of us and the Spaniards (I love and vindicate the Crusades); show why I expected this from their character, and also why I now expect in full faith a glorious termination at last, though prepared to hear of heavy reverses for a time, possibly the recoronation of Joseph at Madrid. Finally, I would represent the thought of peace with Bonaparte as high treason against all honourable feelings, and all liberty. Of the Spanish frigates I would say nothing; would to God that they who issued orders for their capture were buried in the deep with them! There is a sort of methodical writing, carrying with it an air of official imposingness which does better in such cases than better things (though I would not be supposed to imply that it necessarily excludes them); and of this style I should guess that Herries is master.

"Elmsley may be applied to, and, I think, with success. As for Davy, I know not whether the prize which he received from Bonaparte sticks to his fingers or no; I would sooner have cut mine off than accepted it. It is likely to co-operate with some of his Royal Institution associates in making him cry out for peace: yet Davy's heart is sound at the core,

and his all-grasping, all-commanding genius must have redeemed him. The best channel to him is through Sotheby, a man on whom you may calculate. I am particularly anxious that my hint about Poole should be adopted. One article from him about the poor will be worth its weight in gold. I hope Malthus will not be a contributor. By that *first* book moral restraint was pronounced impracticable; by his *second* it is relied upon as his remedy for the poors' rates, which are to be abolished to prevent the poor from marrying; and moral restraint and the parson are to render them contented in celibacy. His main principle is that God makes men and women faster than He can feed them, and he calls upon government to stop the breed. As if we did not at this moment want men for our battles! Rickman's name should stand in the place of his. Rickman has tenfold his knowledge and his ability. There is no man living equal to Rickman upon the subject of political economy. He, too, is a Crusader as to this war. Malthus will prove a peacemonger.

"It would attract much notice, and carry with it much recommendation, if an account of the Welsh Archæology could be procured. Turner may be asked for it; I am afraid he is too busy: William Owen, alas! is one of Joanna Southcote's four-and-twenty elders; and Bard Williams is, God knows where, and nothing is to be got out of him except by word of mouth. There is, however, the chance of Turner; there is Davies of Olveston, the author of

the Celtic Researches; there is Wynn's Welshman —Peter Roberts.

"Farewell! I finish my Annualising in a few days, and shall then set about the Missions.

"God bless you!

R. S.

"Let not Gifford suppose me a troublesome man to deal with, pertinacious about trifles, or standing upon punctilios of authorship. No, Grosvenor, I am a quiet, patient, easy-going hack of the mule breed; regular as clockwork in my pace, sure-footed, bearing the burden which is laid on me, and only obstinate in choosing my own path. If Gifford could see me by this fireside where, like Nicodemus, one candle suffices me in a large room, he would see a man in a coat 'still more threadbare than his own' when he wrote his 'Imitation,' working hard and getting little,—a bare maintenance, and hardly that; writing poems and history for posterity with his whole heart and soul; one daily progressive in learning, not so learned as he is poor, not so poor as proud; not so proud as happy. Grosvenor, there is not a lighter-hearted nor a happier man upon the face of this wide world.

"Your godson thinks that I have nothing to do but to play with him, and anybody who saw what reason he has for his opinion would be disposed to agree with him. I wish you could see my beautiful boy!"

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Nov. 20. 1808.

"My dear Rickman,

"The earliest chronicle in French is that of Geoffrey Vilhardouin, so often quoted by Gibbon, which relates the capture of Constantinople by the Latins, and is, therefore, long subsequent to My Cid. I believe the earliest histories of the Normans are in Latin, and believe also that all Latin chronicles will be found either as you describe them, or florid and pedantic. Men never write with feeling in any language but their own; they never write well upon subjects with which they do not sympathise; and what sympathy could there ever be between monks and chivalry? My Cid is the finest specimen of chivalrous history: it is so true a book that it bespeaks belief for the story of his victory after death, and it requires arguments and dates to prove that this part is not authentic.

"I am brimful of this kind of knowledge, and much more of it will appear in the first vol. of Portuguese History than in the Cid. There are two other subjects on which I am as well informed as those for which you give me credit*, — savage manners and monastic history; and the latter, not the least curious of the whole, certainly the most out-of-

* "Two out-of-the-way things, you certainly know better than all other men — Eastern fable and European chivalry and romance; and this nobody will dispute who has read the annotations to Thalaba and My Cid." — *J. R. to R. S.*

the-way. It is a little unlucky that the least interesting of all my histories must come out first.

"The Saxon language, you say, ousted the Welsh as completely as its possessors. But there is reason to believe that a part only of our prior population was Celtic, and that we had previously hived Teutonic and Cantabrian swarms. A Basque dictionary would be a treasure; none of our etymologists have had recourse to it. I was told by the only person I ever met with who had studied this language, that there was far more of it than had been supposed both in the Spanish and Portuguese, — about as much, probably, as we have of Welsh. Bilbao would be the place to get Basque books; but I will try to obtain a dictionary through Frere, who has offered his services to my uncle in this line, — a new species of diplomacy of more use than the old.

"In one point, and only in one, does China offer an exception to the evil consequences of polygamy*, and that is, it has remained an undivided empire. This, I suppose, is owing to the unique circumstance of its having a literary aristocracy, all subordinate authority being in the hands of men whose education

* "In your introduction to My Cid, I was not surprised that you insist largely on the evils of polygamy, knowing that to be your particular aversion. I myself do not admire polygamy, nor much more that idea of Dr. Johnson's, that happiness would not be less in quantity if all marriages were made by law without consulting the inclinations of the couples. However, in taking a general view, we must not forget that the largest and most populous empire in the world, China, goes on pretty well under both these inconveniences, for I think in fairness you will allow that the want of an alphabet accounts sufficiently for the frozen limits of Chinese science, without calling in the aid of polygamy or of aught else." — *J. R. to R. S. Oct.* 12, 1808.

and whose habits of life make them averse to war. Robbers are the only rebels there; the demoralising effects of the system are the same there as everywhere. Shuey-ping-sin* exemplifies that. I have not asserted that it is a barrier to intellectual improvement otherwise than as that must be checked by public disturbances and private voluptuousness. The want of an alphabet in China is certainly cause sufficient; but it is a supererogatory cause, for those Orientals who have one are not advanced a step farther. For an effect so general there must be some general cause, operating under so many varieties of climate and religion; and this is the only one which has universally existed.

"I recommend and exhort you to read Captain Beaver's African Memoranda; you will find a book and a man after your own heart: I would walk to the Land's End to have the satisfaction of shaking hands with him. . . . . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Lieutenant Southey, H.M.S. Dreadnought.

"Keswick, Nov. 22. 1808.

"My dear Tom,

"I am not quite sure which deserves the severest cart's-tailing, you or your admiral; you for what you say of Frere's translation, he for what he says of mine. A translation is good precisely in proportion as it faithfully represents the matter, manner, and

* The title of a Chinese novel.

spirit of its original: this is equally well done in his verse and my prose, and I will venture to say never has been, and never will be, better done elsewhere. You do not like it at all! With what notion have you been reading it? Not, I am sure, with the recollection that it is part of the oldest poem extant in any modern language, being of the time of our William the Conqueror, the manner and the metre of which have been represented as accurately as possible. In fact, his translation had long been the admiration of all who had seen it, and I had heard wonders of it from Walter Scott, Harry, Heber, and the Hollands, before I saw it. Your phrase of 'eking out' is cart's-tailable without benefit of clergy. Instead of wanting materials, I suppressed half a drawer full of notes, besides my own King Ramiro and Garci Ferrandez.

"Now to the Admiral's criticism. He seems to suppose that a book ought always to be rendered into English of the newest fashion; and, if not, that it then should be given in the English of its own age, — a book of the fifteenth century (sixteenth he means) in that of the fifteenth. He did not recollect that in the thirteenth century there was no such thing as English, which is, I think, answer enough. But the fact is, that both in this Chronicle and in Amadis, I have not formed a style, but followed one. The original, when represented as literally as possible, ran into that phraseology, and all I had to do was to avoid words, and forms of words, of modern creation, and also such as were unintelligibly obsolete. There is, as you must have heard Wordsworth point out, a lan-

guage of pure intelligible English, which was spoken in Chaucer's time, and is spoken in ours; equally understood then and now; and of which the Bible is the written and permanent standard, as it has undoubtedly been the great means of preserving it. To that beautiful manner of narration which characterises the best Chronicles this language is peculiarly adapted; and, in fact, it is *appropriated* to such narration by our books of chivalry, and, I might almost say, *consecrated* to it by the historical parts of Scripture. It so happens that, of all the things which I have ever done, the only one for which all the Reviews with one accord commended me, was for the manner in which I had rendered Amadis. I wish he may steer as clear of all mischief as I shall of them upon this occasion. The fault which he finds is, that I have translated the Chronicle of the Cid instead of writing his History.

"The new Review is to appear in April. Among the persons who are calculated upon to write in it there are Frere; G. Ellis; your admiral's brother, a man of more than common talents, and well to be liked; Heber; Coplestone, the Oxford Poetry Professor (a great admirer of Madoc); Miss Baillie; Sharon Turner; and Captain Burney. A good many of these persons I know have the same thorough conviction of the destructive folly it would be to make peace that I and Walter Scott have; for, to do Scott justice, all his best and bravest feelings are alive upon that subject. I think we shall do good, and will do my part with a hearty good-will. What I said to Bedford was, that as long as this govern-

ment caravan was travelling my road I was content to travel with it; and that, though all my opinions hang together, all the hanging which they imply does not immediately appear. One good thing is, that I shall be pretty sure of civil treatment here, and the Review will carry great weight with it.

"—— has not written to me. There will be such a tremendous campaign that the chances are much against any individual, especially one who will seek the hottest service, as he will do. In the field he is but one, and as obnoxious to a ball as the merest machine of a soldier; but, should he be in a besieged town, such a man is worth a whole regiment there.

"God protect him, wherever he be!

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Walter Savage Landor, Esq.

"Keswick, Nov. 26. 1808.

"In the height of our indignation here at the infamy in Portugal, one of our first thoughts was what yours would be. We in England had the consolation to see that the country redeemed itself by the general outcry which burst out. Never was any feeling within my recollection so general; I did not meet a man who was not boiling over with shame and rage.

"The Spaniards *will* be victorious. I am prepared

to hear of many reverses, but this has from the beginning been as much a faith as an opinion with me; and you, who know the Spaniards, will understand on what ground it has been formed. I am glad you know them, their country, and their language, which, in spite of your Romanised ears, becomes a man's mouth better than any other in present use, except, perhaps, our own. Come and see me when you have nothing to call you elsewhere, and the wind of inclination may set in this way, and we will talk about Spain, and retravel your route, a part of which I remember as vividly as I do my father's house.

"Find out a woman whom you can esteem, and love will grow more surely out of esteem than esteem will out of love. Your soul would then find anchorage. There are fountain springs of delight in the heart of man, which gush forth at the sight of his children, though it might seem before to be hard as the rock of Horeb, and dry as the desert sands. What I learnt from Rousseau, before I laid Epictetus to my heart, was, that Julia was happy with a husband whom she had not loved, and that Wolmer was more to be admired than St. Preux. I bid no man beware of being poor as he grows old, but I say to all men, beware of solitariness in age. Rest is the object to be sought. There is no other way of attaining it here, where we have no convents, but by putting an end to all those hopes and fears to which the best hearts are the most subject. *Experto crede Roberto.* This is the holy oil which has stilled in me a nature little less tempestuous than your own.

"I have 1800 lines of Kehama to send you as soon

as they can be transcribed, which will be with all convenient speed. Seven sections, cantos, or canticles more will finish the poem. The sight of the goal naturally quickens one's speed, and I have good hope of completing it before the spring. Pelayo, whereof I wrote in my letter to Coruña, is not yet begun, the materials not having quite settled into satisfactory order. It is a grand subject, and I feel myself equal to it in everything except topographical knowledge. I ought to have seen Gijon and Covadonga. Asturian scenery, however, must resemble that of the contiguous parts of Leon and Galicia, and I have the whole road from Lugo to Astorga in my eye and in my heart.

"We used our endeavours here to obtain a county meeting and send in a petition which should have taken up the Convention upon its true grounds of honour and moral feeling, keeping all pettier considerations out of sight. Wordsworth,—who left me when we found the business hopeless,—went home to ease his heart in a pamphlet, which I daily expect to hear he has completed. Courts of Inquiry will do nothing, and can do nothing. But we can yet acquit our own souls, and labour to foster and keep alive a spirit which is in the country, and which a cowardly race of hungry place-hunters are endeavouring to extinguish.

"The ill news is just come, and ministers are quaking for Sir John Moore, for whom I do not quake, as he and his army will beat twice their number of French. The fall of Madrid must be looked for, and, perhaps, Zaragoza may be the Sa-

guntum of modern history. *That* may God forbid! but Spain is still unconquerable, and will still be victorious, though there should be a French garrison in every one of its towns. We, as usual, are in fault; thirty thousand English at Bilboa would have secured that side, and England ought to have supplied thrice that number if she supplied any.

. . . . . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Dec. 20. 1808.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"Here is my vindication of the Indian Mission packed up on the table; but, unluckily, too late for to-day's coach, so it cannot reach London before Monday. It is written with hearty good-will, and requires no signature to show whence it comes. Now I wish you would ask Mr. Gifford—if he thinks it expedient to use the pruning-knife—to let the copy be returned to me when the printer has done with it, because it is ten to one that the passages which he would curtail—being the most Robert Southeyish of the whole—would be those that I should like best myself; and, therefore, I would have the satisfaction of putting them in again for my own satisfaction, if for nobody's else. I must still confess to you, Grosvenor, that I have my fears and

suspicions as to the freedom of the Review, and this article will, in some measure, put it to the proof: for it is my nature and my principle to speak and write as earnestly, as plainly, and as straight to the mark as I think and feel. If the editor understands his own interest, he will not restrict me. A Review started against the Edinburgh will instantly be suspected of being a ministerial business, and a sprinkling of my free and fearless way of thinking, will win friends for it among those very persons most likely to be prejudiced against it, and to be misled by the Scotchmen. The high orthodox men, both of Church and State, will always think as they are told: there is no policy in writing to them; the Anti-Jacobin and British Critic are good enough for their faces of brass, brains of lead, and tongues of bell-metal. I shall not offend them, though my reasonings appeal to better hearts and clearer understandings. I would say this to him if I knew him; but I do not desire you to say it, because I do not know how far it might suit the person to whom it relates.

"Spain! Spain! . . . were the resources of the nation at my command, I would stake my head upon the deliverance of that country, and the utter overthrow of Bonaparte. But, good God! what blunders, what girlish panics, what absolute cowardice are there in our measures! Disembarking troops when we ought to be sending ship after ship as fast as they could be put on board. It is madness to wait for transports; send ships of the line, and let them run singly for Lisbon, and Cadiz, and Catalonia. Nothing can ruin the Spaniards unless they

feel the misconduct of England as I am grieved to say I feel it. It is the more heart-breaking because the heart of England is with those noble people. We are not only ready, willing, and able to make every effort for them, but even eager to do it; and yet all is palsied by plans so idiotic that the horse-whip were a fitter instrument of punishment for them than the halter, if it were not for their deadly consequences. God bless you!

R. S."

CHAPTER XV.

COWPER'S TRANSLATION OF MILTON'S LATIN AND ITALIAN POEMS. — KEHAMA. — HISTORY OF BRAZIL. — POLITICS. — LITERARY ADVICE. — SKETCH OF MR. RICKMAN'S CHARACTER. — PLEASURE AT SEEING HIS WRITINGS IN PRINT. — SPANISH AFFAIRS. — THE QUARTERLY REVIEW. — EXCURSION TO DURHAM. — FREEDOM OF HIS OPINIONS. — THE CID. — SENSITIVE FEELINGS. — GEBIR. — BAD EFFECT OF SCIENTIFIC STUDIES. — ANXIETY ABOUT HIS LITTLE BOY. — MR. CANNING WISHES TO SERVE HIM. — APPLICATION FOR STEWARDSHIP OF GREENWICH HOSPITAL ESTATES. — MR. WORDSWORTH'S PAMPHLET ON THE CONVENTION OF CINTRA. — ECLOGUE OF THE ALDERMAN'S FUNERAL. — THE QUARTERLY REVIEW. — SIR JOHN MOORE'S RETREAT. — DEATH OF HIS LANDLORD. — MR. CANNING'S DUEL. — MORTE D'ARTHUR. — ECLECTIC AND QUARTERLY REVIEWS. — DR. COLLYER'S LECTURES. — MR. COLERIDGE'S "FRIEND." — THE SOLDIER'S LOVE. — KEHAMA FINISHED. — PELAYO. — WAR IN THE PENINSULA. — 1809.

In the following letter my father refers to one he had lately received from Miss Seward, partly on the subject of Hayley's edition of Cowper's Milton. The reader will probably, therefore, not be displeased to see it prefaced by the quotation of her remarks.

"To Mr. Hayley's quarto, which he calls Cowper's Milton, I six years past subscribed, and have sedulously perused my copy. Far from proving what its editor expects, — the consummation of Milton's and

his translator's glory,—it appears to me utterly incapable of adding to that of either. If Milton's Latin and Italian compositions are rich in poetic matter, they have met with no justice from Cowper, in whose dress they strike me as pedantic, tuneless, and spiritless. Of the Damonides Langhorne formed a sweet and touching poem, one of the darlings of my youthful years. Cowper is as hard as iron in comparison, and almost all the pathos vanishes in the stiff and laboured expression; yet Hayley, for his idol, *challenges* the comparison, alleging also his conviction that, if the spirit of Milton could have directed the choice of a translator from all living men, he would have selected Cowper; and that from the parity in their genius, their style, their character, and their fortunes. To this imaginary choice I am more than sceptical. *Rhyme* was not Cowper's *forte:* nothing which he has written in it, except by sudden gleams, is above mediocrity. He not only wanted ear to form its harmony, but rejected that harmony systematically. The numbers of its great master were displeasing to him. He says in his letters, 'Pope set his ideas to a tune which *any one* may catch:' hence, when Cowper wrote in *rhyme,* provided he could cram his thoughts into the couplets, he chose rather that they should be rough than harmonious, that they should stumble rather than that they should glide. His blank verse is the sheet anchor of his poetic fame. The Task, and the fragment on Yardley Oak, will be coeval with our language; and, if his other works live, it will be for that they were written by the author of these two

compositions. As for the quarto, seldom did a great book issue from the press whose contents were of less consequence to the literature of the country. The critical remarks which they contain on the Paradise Lost are few and trivial. T. Warton's notes, copied from that able writer's edition of Milton's lesser poems, are the most valuable part of the work.

"Hayley is quite insane upon the subject of imputed similitude between Milton and Cowper as poets and men. He broaches it again and again, to the perfect nausea of all who can understand the writings of either, or who ever made a remark on their characters and destiny. To *such* it must be evident that only one point of similitude exists, — that the best works of each are in *blank* verse. Between the *Paradise Lost* and the *Task* there is no *other* shadow of resemblance. The subject of the first, grave, dignified, regular, unbroken, and genuinely epic; that of the other, originally light and comic. Meantime, the poet floats through the pages of his desultory song, without rudder, without compass or anchor; yet he makes a varied and very interesting voyage, pleasing even to the most learned reader, and far more pleasing to the generality of readers than poetry of a higher order, because it presents objects familiar to their observation, and level with their capacity, and in numbers suited to the theme; sufficiently spirited and harmonious, but bearing no likeness to Milton's rich maze of alternately grand and delicate verse."

It appears that Mr. Bedford had been urged by Gifford to review this book, which he objected to do,

upon the plea of being a "very poor Italian scholar, and not at all read in Milton, whom," he continues, "I freely confess I do not understand sufficiently to be in the same raptures with, which our countrymen, in general, think it a national duty to feel."

To this my father replies; —

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Jan. 6. 1809.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"You make a confession respecting Milton which nine hundred and ninety-nine persons out of the thousand would make if they were honest enough; for his main excellencies are like M. Angelo's, only to be thoroughly appreciated by an artist. This, however, by no means incapacitates you from reviewing Hayley's book, in which your business lies with Cowper and with his biographer, one of whose works (his Animal Ballads) I once reviewed by quoting from O'Keefe's song, — *Hayley*, gaily, gamboraily, higgledy, pigglegy, galloping, draggle-tail, dreary dun. Hayley, as Miss Seward has just remarked to me in a letter, is perfectly insane upon the subject of Cowper's resemblance to Milton; there is no other resemblance between them than that both wrote in blank verse—but blank verse as different as possible. You may compare Cowper's translations (which, I suppose are very bad, as many of his lesser pieces are, and as Miss Seward tells me) with Langhorne's; and you may estimate Cowper himself as a poet, as a man of intellect, and as a translator of Homer, showing that he is not over-valued; but

that his popularity is owing to his piety, not his poetry, and that that piety was craziness. I like his letters, but think their so great popularity one of the very many proofs of the imbecility of the age. By-the-by, a very pretty piece of familiar verse, by Cowper, appeared, about two years ago, in the Monthly Magazine.

"Ah, Grosvenor! the very way in which you admire that passage in Kehama* convinces me that it ought not to be there. Did I not tell you it was clap-trappish? you are clapping as hard as you can to prove the truth of my opinion. That it grew there naturally is certain, but does it suit with the poem? is it of a piece or colour with the whole? Is not the poet speaking in himself, whereas the whole character of the poem requires that he should be out of himself! I know very well that three parts of the public will agree with you in calling it the best thing in the poem; but my poem ought to have no things which do not necessarily belong to it. There will be a great deal to do to it, and a good deal is already done in the preceding parts.

"I have long expected a schism between the Grenvilles and the Foxites. Jeffrey has been trying to unite the Opposition and the Jacobins, as they are called. He *hurts* the Opposition, and he wrongs the Jacobins; he hurts the former by associating them with a name that is still unpopular, and he wrongs the friends of liberty by supposing that they are not the deadliest enemies of Bonaparte. Walter Scott,

* See Curse of Kehama, Canto x. verse 20. commencing —
"They sin who tell us love can die."

whom I look upon as as complete an Anti-Jacobin as need be, does not sing out more loudly, 'Fight on my merry men all!' than I do. General Moore must feel himself stronger than we have supposed him to be, or he would not advance into the plains of Castille. If he have 40,000, he will beat twice the number; and, for my own part, superior as he is in cavalry and artillery (ours being the best in the world), I do not see what we have to fear from numbers against him, for nothing can withstand our cavalry in a flat country. You know, Grosvenor, I never felt a fear till it was said he was retreating, and now that he is marching on, all my apprehensions are over. Huzza! it will be Rule Britannia by land as well as by sea.

"I have had a grievous cold, which has prevented me from rising as soon as it is light, and thereby, for awhile, stopped Kehama. This evening I have corrected the fourth sheet of Brazil; the volume will be ready in the spring. I am now busy in filling up some skeleton chapters in the middle of the volume. This will be as true a history, and as industriously and painfully made, as ever yet appeared; yet I cannot say that I expect much present approbation for it. It is deficient in fine circumstances; and as for what is called fine writing, the public will get none of that article from me; sound sense, sound philosophy, and sound English I will give them.

"I was beginning to wonder what was become of Wynn. Can you procure for me a copy of the report of the Court of Inquiry, or will you ask Rickman if he can? I do not write to him till the

season of franking returns. I shall want it hereafter as one of my documents. Lord Moira has risen in my estimation; he is the only person who seems to have had anything like a feeling of the moral strength which was on our side, and which we completely gave up by the convention. God bless you!

R. S."

To Lieut. Southey, H. M. S. Dreadnought.

"Keswick, Jan. 10. 1809.

"My dear Tom,

"I have corrected five sheets of the Brazil; and am now hard at work in transcribing, and filling up skeleton chapters; that in particular which contains everything concerning my friends the Tupinambas that has not inadvertently been said before. I wish you were here to hear it, as it gets on. There is a great pleasure in reading these things to any one who takes an interest in them, — and like our toast at breakfast, they seem the better for coming in fresh and fresh. I made an important discovery relative to De Lery — one of my best printed authorities, — this morning. This author, who though a Frenchman, was a very faithful writer, translated his own French into Latin, and I used the Latin edition in De Boy's collection, — you remember the book with those hideous prints of the savages at their cannibal feasts; — William Taylor laid hands on the French book, and sent it me; it arrived last Thursday only; and I, in transcribing with my usual scrupulous accuracy, constantly referred to this original, because I

knew that when an author translates his own book, he often alters it, and therefore it was probable that I might sometimes find a difference worthy of notice. Well, I found my own references to the number of the chapter wrong; for the first time it past well enough for a blunder, though I wondered at it a little, being remarkably exact in these things; the second time I thought it very extraordinary; and a third instance made me quite certain that something was wrong, but that the fault was not in me. Upon examination, it appeared that a whole chapter, and that chapter the most important as to the historical part of the volume, had been omitted by De Boy, because he was a Catholic, De Lery a Huguenot, and this chapter exposed the villany of Villegagnon, who went to Brazil expressly to establish an asylum for the Huguenots; when there, was won over by the Guises, apostatised, and thus ruined a colony, which must else inevitably have made Rio de Janeiro now the capital of a French, instead of a Portuguese empire. The main facts I had collected before, and clearly understood; but the knavery of a Roman Catholic editor had thus nearly deprived me of my best and fullest authority, and of some very material circumstances, for no one has ever yet suspected this collection of being otherwise than faithful, though it is now more than two hundred years old. See here the necessity of tracing every thing to the fountain-head when it is possible.

"What you said about transports I repeated to Bedford: he made inquiry, and understood the objection came from the navy captains, who did not like

to have their ships encumbered, or to *feel* as if they were transports. I repeated it to Coleridge and Wordsworth, and through them it has reached Stuart, and got into the Courier, whether or not with effect time will show; but there is nothing like sending so obvious a truth afloat: it will find its way sooner or later. I see the captains are petitioning for an increase of pay; they will get it to be sure, and then the increase must extend to you also.

"Things in Spain look well. Bonaparte's bulletins prove beyond all doubt that every heart is against him, and his threat of taking the crown himself is the perfect frenzy of anger. Sir John Moore's movements backward and forwards, have been mere moves at chess to gain time, and wait for a blunder on the part of the adversary, — so Bedford tells me; and his intelligence is good, coming from Herries, who is Perceval's secretary, and Gifford, who is in Canning's confidence. Moore is a very able man, and is acting with a boldness which gives everybody confidence that knows him. He will beat twice his own number of Frenchmen; and I do not think greater odds can be brought against him. It looks well, that in this fresh embarkation, the officers are desired not to take more baggage than they can carry themselves. At him, Trojan! We shall beat him, Tom, upon Spanish ground. Let but our men fairly see the faces of the French in battle, and they will soon see their backs too.

"The Grenvilles and Foxites are likely to separate upon the question of peace. Canning hankers after the Grenvilles, and would do much to bring them in

with him, instead of his wretched associates. They are not popular; but if they had courage to make a home charge upon the Duke of York, and insist upon his removal as a preliminary and *sine qua non* to their going in, that measure would win them a popularity which would carry them in in spite of every obstacle. God bless you!

Yours,
R. S."

To Lieut. Southey, H. M. S. Dreadnought.

"Keswick, Feb. 3. 1809.

"We want a Nelson in the army. Poor Sir John Moore was too cautious a man. He waited in distrust of the Spaniards, to see what course the war would take, instead of being on the spot, to make it take the course he wished. When Hope was at the passes of the Guadarrama mountain, he and the rest of the army should have been at Samosierra, the other key to Madrid. There would have been reinforcements sent, if he had not positively written to have empty transports; and the men were, therefore, disembarked. Had there been twenty thousand fresh troops at Corunna, to have met the French, what a victory should we have obtained; when even with the wreck of an army, foot-sore, broken-hearted, and half starved, we defeated them so completely at the last! One thing results from this action, — the fear of invasion must be at rest for ever. We can beat the French under every possible disadvantage, and

with two, almost indeed three to one, against us. Come, then, Bonaparte! the sooner the better.

"Ministers are jarring with each other. It is Canning who stands up for Spain; and I learn from Walter Scott, that they will stand by the Spaniards to the last, cost what it may. But they paralyse one another, and the rest of the Cabinet—by meeting him half way, doing *half* what he proposes—utterly undoes everything. Still if we had a few such men as Cochrane in the army—men who would have the same faith in British bottom by land as we have at sea; that faith would redeem us. To be upon the defensive in the field is ruin. Men never can win a battle unless they are determined to win it, and expect to win it; and that cannot be the case when they wait to be attacked. 100,000 men in Spain would overthrow and destroy Bonaparte; but we send them in batches to be cut up. We squander the strength of the country, we waste the blood of the country, we sacrifice the honour of the country, and bring upon ourselves a disgrace, which Bonaparte, were he ten times more powerful than he is, could never inflict upon us, were there but true wisdom and right courage in our rulers.

"But though Bonaparte may take the country, he cannot keep it. He would not have done what he has, if the Spaniards had proclaimed a republic; for which, you may remember, I pointed out the peculiar fitness which their separate states afforded.

"The new review is to be called the Quarterly, and will, I suppose soon start. I fancy W. Scott has

taken care of the Cid there. Of the new edition of Thalaba, nine books are printed. It would be convenient if I could borrow from my Hindoo gods a few of their supernumerary heads and hands, for I find more employment than my present complement can get through.

"Holding that my face will 'carry off a drab,' I have a new coat of that complexion just come home from Johnny Cockbains, the king of the tailors.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Mr. Ebenezer Elliott.

"Keswick, Feb. 3. 1809.

"Sir,

"Yesterday I received your note enclosing the specimen of your poems. I have perused that specimen, but my advice cannot be comprised in a few words.

"A literary, as well as a medical opinion, Mr. Elliott, must needs be blindly given, unless the age and circumstances of the person who requires it are known. When I advised Henry White to publish a second volume of poems, it was because he had fixed his heart upon a University education, and this seemed to be a feasible method of raising funds for that end; his particular circumstances rendering that prudent which would otherwise have been very much the reverse. For poetry is not a marketable article unless there be something strange or

peculiar to give it a fashion; and in his case what money might possibly have been raised, would, in almost every instance, have been considered rather as given to the author than paid for his book. Your poem would not find purchasers except in the circle of your own friends; out of that circle not twenty copies would be sold. I believe not half that number.

"You are probably a young man, Sir, and it is plain from this specimen that you possess more than one of those powers which form the poet, and those in a far more than ordinary degree. Whether your plans of life are such as to promise leisure for that attention (almost it might be said that devotement), without which no man can ever become a great poet, you yourself must know. If they should, you will in a very few years have outgrown this poem, and would then be sorry to see it in print, irrecoverably given to the public, because you would feel it to be an inadequate proof of your own talents. If, on the other hand, you consider poetry as merely an amusement or an ornament of youth, to be laid aside in riper years for the ordinary pursuits of the world, with still less indulgence will you then regard the printed volume, for you will reckon it among the follies of which you are ashamed. In either case it is best not to publish.

"It is far, very far from my wish to discourage or depress you. There is great promise in this specimen; it has all the faults which I should wish to see in the writings of a young poet, as the surest indications that he has that in him which will enable him

to become a good one. But no young man can possibly write a good narrative poem; though I believe he cannot by any other means so effectually improve himself as by making the attempt. I myself published one at the age of twenty-one: it made a reputation for me,—not so much by its merits, as because it was taken up by one party, and abused by another, almost independently of its merits or demerits, at a time when party-spirit was more violent than it is to be hoped it will ever be again. What has been the consequences of this publication? That the poem from beginning to end was full of incorrect language and errors of every kind; that all the weeding of years could never weed it clean; and that many people at this day rate me, not according to the standard of my present intellect, but by what it was fourteen years ago. Your subject, also, has the same disadvantage with mine, that it is anti-national: and believe me, this is a grievous one; for though we have both been right in our feelings, yet to feel *against* our own country can only be right upon great and transitory occasions, and none but our contemporaries can feel with us,—none but those who remember the struggle and took part in it. And you are more unfortunate than I was, for America is acting at this time unnaturally against England; and every reader will feel this; and his sense of what the Americans are now, will make him fancy that you paint falsely in describing them as they were then. There is yet another reason—criticism is conducted upon a different plan from what it was when I commenced my career. You live near the

Dragon of Wantley's den; but you will provoke enemies as venemous if you publish; and Heaven knows whether or no you are gifted with armour of proof against them. Nor is it the effect that malicious censure and ridicule might produce upon your own feelings which is of so much importance, as what would be produced upon your friends. They who are so only in name will derive a provoking pleasure from seeing you laughed at and abused; they who love you will feel more pain than you yourself, because you will and must have a higher confidence in yourself, and a stronger conviction of injustice than they can be supposed to possess.

"The sum of my advice is—do not publish this poem; but if you can without grievous imprudence afford to write poetry, continue so to do, because, hereafter, you will write it well. As yet you have only green fruit to offer; wait a season, and there will be a fair and full gathering when it is ripe.

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Walter Savage Landor, Esq.

"Keswick, Feb. 9. 1809.

"You have a bill coming before Parliament. The Speaker's secretary happens to be one of my very intimate friends, and one of the men in the world for whom I have the highest respect. It may be some convenience to you on this occasion to know him, because he can give you every necessary information respecting Parliamentary business, and thus, perhaps,

spare you some needless trouble; and there needs no other introduction than knocking at his door and sending up your name, with which he is well acquainted. Rickman is his name; and you will find it over his door, in St. Stephen's Court, New Palace Yard, next door to the Speaker's. I will tell you what kind of man he is. His outside has so little polish about it, that once having gone from Christchurch to Pool, in his own boat, he was taken by the press-gang, — his robust figure, hard-working hands, and strong voice all tending to deceive them. A little of this is worn off. He is the strongest and clearest-headed man that I have ever known. 'Pondere, numero et mensurâ,' is his motto; but to all things he carries the same reasoning and investigating intellect as to mathematical science, and will find out in Homer and the Bible facts necessarily to be inferred from the text, and which yet have as little been supposed to be there intimated, as the existence of metal was suspected in potash before Davy detected it there. I have often said that I learnt how to see for the purposes of poetry from Gebir, how to read for the purposes of history from Rickman. His manners are stoical; they are like the husk of the cocoa nut, and his inner nature is like the milk within its kernel. When I go to London I am always his guest. He gives me but half his hand when he welcomes me at the door, but I have his whole heart, — and there is not that thing in the world which he thinks would serve or gratify me that he does not do for me, unless it be something which he thinks I can as well do myself. The sub-

ject which he best understands is political economy. Were there but half a dozen such men in the House of Commons, there would be courage, virtue, and wisdom enough there to save this country from that revolution to which it is so certainly approaching.

"I should not have written just now, had it not been to mention Rickman; thinking that you may find it useful to know him; for I wished when writing to tell you of Kehama; a good many interruptions have occurred to delay my progress, indispositions of my own, or of the children,—the latter the only things concerning which I am anxious over much. At present my wife is seriously ill, and when I shall be sufficiently at rest to do anything—God knows. Another heat will finish the poem.

"Coleridge's essay * is expected to start in March.

"My uncle, Mr. Hill, is settled at his parsonage, at Staunton-upon-Wye,—in that savage part of the world to which your cedar plantation will give new beauty, and your name new interest when those cedars shall have given place to their offspring: it is probable that you have no other neighbour so well informed within the same distance. Next year, God willing, I shall travel to the South, and halt with him; it is likely I may then find you out, either at Llantony or somewhere in the course of a wide circuit. Meantime I will still hope that some fair breeze of inclination may send you here to talk about Spain, to plan a great poem, and to cruise with me about Derwentwater. God bless you!

R. SOUTHEY."

* The Friend.

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Feb. 12. 1809.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"How shall I thank you for the pleasure and delight of your excellent and pretty letter, enclosing the half quarter of my poor mutilated pension? That pension makes me disposed to swear every time it comes.

"I have been busy in using borrowed books, which were to be returned with great speed, and which were like woodcocks, all trail. They cost me three weeks' incessant application, — that is, all the application I could command. I waited to begin a new article for the Quarterly till the first number was published; and as that is so near at hand, will begin to-morrow. But if Gifford likes my pattern-work, he should send me more cloth to cut; he should send me Travels, which I review better than anything else. I am impatient to see the first number. Young lady never felt more desirous to see herself in a new ball-dress, than I do to see 'my own' performance in print, often as that gratification falls to my lot. The reason is, that in the multiplicity of my employments, I forget the form and manner of everything as soon as it is out of sight, and they come to me like pleasant recollections of what I wish to remember. Besides, the thing looks differently in print. In short, Mr. Bedford, there are a great many philosophical reasons for this fancy of mine, and one of the best of all reasons is, that I hold it good to make everything a pleasure which it is possible to make so. And these sort of Claude's

spectacles are very convenient things for a man who lives in a land of rain and clouds; they make an artificial sunshine for what some people would call gloomy weather. . . . . .

"God bless you! In a few days I will create leisure for another number of Kehama. I have not written a line of it these last two months: first, I was indisposed myself; then the children were; lastly, my wife. Anxiety unfits me for anything that requires feeling as well as thought. I can labour, I can think, — thought and labour will not produce poetry.

In haste,
Yours,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To John May, Esq.

"Keswick, Feb. 16. 1809.

"My dear Friend,

"What is your Lisbon news? Notwithstanding the Duke of York and Mrs. Clarke, I think of those countries; and notwithstanding the disasters which our gross misconduct could not fail to bring on, my confidence in the ultimate success of a good cause remains undiminished. I could have wished, indeed, that the work of reformation, which Joseph Bonaparte is beginning, had been begun by the junta; that they had called the principle of liberty as well as of loyalty to their aid, and made freedom their watchword as well as the Virgin Mary, for she may

be on both sides. Certainly it was not easy to do this; and I have always suspected that those leaders such as Palafox, who might have wished to do it, bore in mind the first great struggle of the Portuguese against Castille, when the infante Don João, a prisoner, and in chains, served as João the First's stalking-horse, and was painted upon his banner, till he found he could safely assume the crown himself. The convenience of such a name as Ferdinand, and the stain which France has brought upon the very name of republicanism, were causes which might well induce a timid, and therefore a feeble, line of conduct. . . . . Why is Bonaparte gone to Paris at such a time? If any change in the north should call him into Germany, with only part of his army, the tide will roll back, and King Joseph be forced a second time to decamp. Meantime I expect a desperate resistance about the southern coast, wherever our ships can be of use. Is it possible we can leave Elvas without seeing it well garrisoned? the place is absolutely impregnable. Moore would have done wisely had he fallen back upon the frontier, where there was a double line of fortified towns, into which he might have thrown his troops whenever he felt it necessary to leave the mountains; and against those fortresses the French would have wasted, and must have divided their force, allowing us time to send out another army. Regular armies in such wars as this must always be successful in the field, but they have always met their chief disasters before fortified towns; tactics are nothing there, individual courage everything; and women and children fight by the

side of their husbands or their fathers, from the window, on the housetops, or on the walls.

"Have you seen William Taylor's Defence of the Slave Trade in Bolinbroke's Voyage to the Demerary? It is truly William-Taylorish; thoroughly ingenious, as usual, but not ingenuous; he weakens the effect of his own arguments by keeping the weak side of his cause altogether out of sight. In defending the slave trade, as respects the duty of man towards man, he has utterly failed; he has succeeded in what you and I shall think of more consequence, — in showing what the probable end is for which wise Providence has so long permitted the existence of so great an evil. . . . . .

Believe me,

Yours very affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To W. Gifford, Esq.

"Keswick, March 6. 1809.

"Sir,

"Your letter, and its enclosed draft, reached me this afternoon. I have to acknowledge the one, and thank you for the other. It gratifies me that you approve my defence of the missionaries, because I am desirous of such approbation; and it will gratify me if it should be generally approved, because I wrote from a deep and strong conviction of the importance of the subject. With respect to any alterations in this or any future communication, I am

perfectly sensible that absolute authority must always be vested in the editor. The printer has done some mischief by misplacing a paragraph in p. 225., which ought to have followed the quotation in the preceding page. The beginning of the last paragraph is made unintelligible by this dislocation; and indeed you have omitted the sarcasm, which it was designed to justify. I could have wished that this Review had less resembled the Edinburgh in the tone and temper of its criticisms. That book of Miss Owenson's is, I dare say, very bad both in manners and morals; yet, had it fallen into my hands, I think I could have told her so in such a spirit, that she herself would have believed me, and might have profited by the censure. The same quantity of rain which would clear a flower of its blights, will, if it falls heavier and harder, wash the roots bare, and beat the blossoms to the ground. I have been in the habit of reviewing more than eleven years, for the lucre of gain, and not, God knows, from any liking to the occupation; and of all my literary misdeeds, the only ones of which I have repented have been those reviewals which were written with undue asperity, so as to give unnecessary pain. I propose to continue the subject of the Missions through two other articles, neither of which will probably be half so long as the first; one respecting the South Sea Islands, the other South Africa. Lord Valentia's book I shall be glad to receive, and any others which you may think proper to entrust to me. Two things I can promise, — perfect sincerity in what I write, without the slightest assumption of knowledge which

I do not possess; and a punctuality not to be exceeded by that of Mr. Murray's opposite neighbours at St. Dunstan's.

I am, Sir,
Yours very respectfully,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Lieut. Southey, H.M.S. Dreadnought.

"Keswick, March 14. 1809.

"My dear Tom,

"Yesterday I returned from a visit to Henry and his bride. . . . . He lives in a street called by the unaccountable name of Old Elvet. A lucky opening on the opposite side of the way leaves him a good view of the cathedral on the hill, and the river is within a stone's throw of his back-door. Durham stands upon a peninsula, — that is to say, the main part of it, — a high bank, on which is the cathedral, and the castle, and the best houses; and there are delightful walks below, such as no other city can boast, through fine old trees on the river's bank, from whence you look to the noble building on the opposite side, and see one bridge through the other. Harry is well off there, getting rapidly into practice, and living among all sorts of people, — prebends and Roman Catholics, fox-hunters and old women, with all of whom he seems to accord equally well. . . . It is a place where any person might live contentedly. Among all these thousand and one

acquaintances there are some whom one might soon learn to love, and a great many with whom to be amused, and none that are insufferable. One day I dined with Dr. Zouch, who wrote the Life of Sir P. Sidney. I never saw a gentler-minded man; the few sentences of bigotry which he has written must have cost him strange efforts to bring forth, for I do not think a harsh expression ever could pass his lips, nor a harsh feeling ever enter his heart. In spite of his deafness, I contrived to have a good deal of talk with him. Dr. Bell was there, the original transplanter of that Hindoo system of teaching which Lancaster has adopted. He is a great friend of Coleridge's; a man pleasant enough, *certes* a great benefactor to his country, but a little given to flattery, and knowing less about India than a man ought to know who has lived there. Another day I dined with Dr. Fenwick, the ex-physician of the place. There we drank the Arch-duke Charles's health in Tokay, a wine which I had never before tasted. This is the first victory by which I ever got anything... The Tokay proved prolific. Harry's next door neighbour was one of the party, and fancied some unknown wine which had been presented to him might be the same as this; and he proposed, as we walked home, to bring in a bottle and sup with us. I, however, recognised it for Old Sack, — itself no bad thing.

. . . . . .

"On Monday last, after a week's visit, I took coach where I had appointed, to pass a day with James Losh, whom you know I have always

mentioned as coming nearer the ideal of a perfect man than any other person whom it has ever been my good fortune to know; so gentle, so pious, so zealous in all good things, so equal-minded, so manly, so without speck or stain in his whole habits of life. I slept at his house, which is two miles from Newcastle, and the next day took the mail to Carlisle. It is an interesting road, frequently in sight of the Tyne before you reach Hexham, and then as frequently along the Eden. We reached Carlisle at ten o'clock. Yesterday I rose at five, and walked to Hesket to breakfast, fourteen miles; a mile lost on the way made it fifteen. There was many a gentle growl within for the last five miles. From thence another stage of fourteen brought me home by half after two, — a good march, performed with less fatigue than any other of equal length in the whole course of my pedestrian campaigns.

"I found all well at home, God be praised! Your letter was waiting for me, and one from Gifford, containing 16*l.* 8*s.* for my article in the second Quarterly, with *quant. suff.* of praise, which I put down to the account of due desert. He has a reviewal of Holmes's American Annals in his hands for the third number. I am about the Polynesian Mission, and am to have Lord Valencia's Travels as soon as they appear. He requested me to choose any subjects I pleased. I have named Barlow's Columbiad, Elton's Hesiod, and Whitaker's Life of St. Neots; and I have solicited the office of justifying Frere against Sir John Moore's friends. . . . . Send for Words-

worth's pamphlet*: the more you read it the higher will be your admiration. . . . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Richard Duppa, Esq.

"March 31. 1809.

"My dear Duppa,

"I am sorry for your loss,—a heavy one under any circumstances, and particularly so to one who, being single at your time of life, will now feel more entirely what it is to have no person who intimately loves him. It is not in the order of nature that there should ever be a void in the heart of man,—the old leaves should not fall from the tree till the young ones are expanding to supply their place.

"I have now three girls living, and as delightful a playfellow in the shape of a boy as ever man was blest with. Very often, when I look at them, I think what a fit thing it would be that Malthus should be hanged.

"You may have known that I have some dealings, in the way of trade, with your bookseller, Murray. One article of mine is in his first Quarterly, and he has bespoken more. Whenever I shall have the satisfaction of seeing you once more under this roof, it will amuse you to see how dextrously Gifford

* On the Convention of Cintra.

emasculated this article of mine of its most forcible parts. I amused myself one morning with putting them all in again, and restoring vigour, consistency, and connection to the whole. It is certainly true that his Majesty gives me a pension of 200*l.* a-year, out of which his Majesty deducts 60*l.* and a few shillings; but, if his Majesty trebled or decupled the pension, and remitted the whole taxation, it would be the same thing. The treasury should never bribe, nor his judges deter me from delivering a full and free opinion upon any subject which seems to me to call for it. If I hate Bonaparte, and maintain that this country never ought to accept of any peace while that man is Emperor of France, it is precisely upon the same principle that I formerly disliked Pitt, and maintained that we never ought to have gone to war.

"I am glad you have been interested by the Cid; it is certainly the most curious chronicle in existence. In the course of the summer,—I hope early in it,—you will see the first volume of my History of Brazil, of which nine-and-twenty sheets are printed. This book has cost me infinite labour. The Cid was an easy task; of that no other copy was made than what went to the press; of this every part has been twice written, many parts three times, and all with my own hand. For this I expect to get a sufficient quantity of abuse, and little else; money is only to be got by such productions as are worth nothing more than what they fetch per sheet. I could get my thousand a-year, if I would but do my best en-

deavours to be dull, and aim at nothing higher than Reviews and Magazines.

"God bless you!

Yours very truly,
R. SOUTHEY."

To Walter Savage Landor, Esq.

"April 23. 1809.

"I shall send three sections of Kehama to meet you in London; three more will complete it, and would have so done before this time had all things been going on well with me. I had a daughter born on the 27th last month; a few days after the birth her mother was taken ill, and for some time there was cause of serious alarm. This, God be thanked, is over. The night before last we had another alarm of the worst kind, though happily this also is passing away. My little boy went to bed with some slight indications of a trifling cold. His mother went up as usual to look at him before supper; she thought he coughed in a strange manner, called me, and I instantly recognised the sound of the croup. We have a good apothecary within three minutes' walk, and luckily he was at home. He immediately confirmed our fears. The child was taken out of bed and bled in the jugular vein, a blister placed on the throat next morning, and by these vigorous and timely remedies we hope and trust the disease is subdued. But what a twelve hours did we pass, knowing the nature of the disease, and only hoping

the efficacy of the remedy. Even now I am far, very far, from being at ease. There is a love which passeth the love of women, and which is more lightly alarmed than the wakefullest jealousy.

"Landor, I am not a stoic at home: I feel as you do about the fall of an old tree; but, O Christ! what a pang it is to look upon the young shoot and think it will be cut down. And this is the thought which almost at all times haunts me; it comes upon me in moments when I know not whether the tears that start are of love or of bitterness. There is an evil, too, in seeing all things like a poet; circumstances which would glide over a healthier mind sink into mine; every thing comes to me with its whole force, — the full meaning of a look, a gesture, a child's imperfect speech, I can perceive, and cannot help perceiving; and thus am I made to remember what I would give the world to forget.

"Enough, and too much of this. The leaven of anxiety is working in my whole system; I will try to quiet it by forcing myself to some other subject.

"What prevented Gebir from being read by the foolish? I believe the main reason was, that it is too hard for them; more than that, it was too good. That they should understand its merits was not to be expected; but they did not find meaning enough upon the surface to make them fancy they understood it. Why should you not write a poem as good, and more intelligible, and display the same powers upon a happier subject? Yet certain it is, that Gebir excited far more attention than you seem to be aware of. Two manifest imitations have appeared —

Rough's Play of the Conspiracy of Gowrie, and the first part of Sotheby's Saul. When Gifford published his Juvenal, one of the most base attacks that ever disgraced a literary journal was made upon it in the Critical Review by some one of the heroes of his Baviad. Gifford wrote an angry reply, in which he brought forward all the offences of the Review for many years back; one of those offences was its praise of Gebir. I laughed when I heard this, guessing pretty well at the nature of Gifford's feelings; for I had been the reviewer of whose partiality he complained. Gebir came to me with a parcel of other poems, which I was to kill off. I was young in the trade, and reviewed it injudiciously, so that every body supposed it to be done by some friend of the author. For I analysed the story; studded it with as many beautiful extracts as they would allow room for; praised its merits almost up to the height of my feelings, and never thought of telling the reader that if he went to the book itself he would find any more difficulty in comprehending it than he found in that abstract. Thus, instead of serving the poem, I in reality injured it. The world, now-a-days, never believes praise to be sincere; men are so accustomed to hunt for faults, that they will not think any person can honestly express unmingled admiration.

"I once passed an evening with Professor Young at Davy's. The conversation was wholly scientific, and of course I was a listener. But I have heard the history of Thomas Young, as he is still called by those who knew him when he was a Quaker, and

believe him to be a very able man; generally speaking I have little liking for men of science: their pursuits seem to deaden the imagination, and harden the heart; they are so accustomed to analyse and anatomise every thing, to understand, or fancy they understand, whatever comes before them, that they frequently become mere materialists, account for every thing by mechanism and motion, and would put out of the world all that makes the world endurable. I do not undervalue their knowledge, nor the utility of their discoveries; but I do not like the men. My own nature requires something more than they teach; it pants after things unseen; it exists upon the hope of that better futurity which all its aspirations promise and seem to prove.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"April 30. 1809.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"It would not be easy to tell you all I have suffered since Tuesday night, when Herbert was seized with the croup. God be praised! the disease seems to be subdued; but he is still in a state to make us very anxious: pale with loss of blood, his neck blistered, and fevered by the fretfusness the blister occasions. The poor child has been so used to have me for his play-fellow, that he will have me for his nurse, and you may imagine with what feelings I

endeavour to amuse him. But, thank God! he is living, and likely to live.

"Almost the only wish I ever give utterance to is, that the next hundred years were over. It is not that the uses of this world seem to me weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable,—God knows far otherwise! No man can be better contented with his lot. My paths are paths of pleasantness. I am living happily, and to the best of my belief fulfilling, as far as I am able, the purposes for which I was created. Still the instability of human happiness is ever before my eyes; I long for the certain and the permanent; and, perhaps, my happiest moments are those when I am looking on to another state of being, in which there shall be no other change than that of progressing in knowledge, and thereby in power and enjoyment.

"I have suffered some sorrow in my time, and expect to suffer much more; but looking into my own heart, I do not believe that a single pang could have been spared. My Herbert says to me, 'O you are very naughty,' when I hold his hands while his neck is dressed. I have as deep a conviction that whatever affliction I have ever endured, or yet have to endure, is dispensed to me in mercy and in love, as he will have for my motives for inflicting pain upon him now—if it should please God that he should ever live to understand them.

"It is three months before the third Quarterly will appear, and by that time present topics will have become stale; but I wish you would let Gifford know, that if the subject is not out of time, and it be thought fit to notice it, I will right zealously and

fearlessly undertake a justification of Frere's conduct, which we in this part of the country do entirely approve. God bless you!

R. S."

To Lieut. Southey, H. M. S. Dreadnought.

"Keswick, Monday, May 22. 1809.

"My dear Tom,

"My last letter told you of Herbert's danger, and his recovery. You will be a little shocked at the intelligence in this. We lost Emma yesterday night. Five days ago she was in finer health than we had ever seen her, and I repeatedly remarked it. For a day or two she had been ailing; on Saturday night breathed shortly, and was evidently ill. Edmondson repeatedly saw her, thought her better at ten o'clock, and assured us he saw no danger. In half an hour she literally fell asleep without a struggle. Edith is as well as should be expected, and I, perhaps, better. You know how I take tooth-ache and tooth drawings, and I have almost learnt to bear moral pain, not, indeed, with the same levity, but with as few outward and visible signs. In fact, God be thanked for it, there never was a man who had more entirely set his heart upon things permanent and eternal than I have done; the transitoriness of everything here is always present to my feeling as well as my understanding. Were I to speak as sincerely of my family as Wordsworth's little girl, my story—that I have five children; three of them at home, and two under

my mother's care in heaven. —— No more of this; and, to convince you that I am not more unhappy than I profess, I will fill up the sheet, instead of sending you a mere annotation of this loss. It is well you left her such an infant, for you are thus spared some sorrow.

"Ballantyne has just sent me a present of Campbell's new poem, and enclosed the last Edinburgh Review in the parcel. They have taken occasion there, under cover of a methodist's book, to attempt an answer to my Missionary Defence. I hear from all quarters that this article of mine has excited much notice, and produced considerable effect. I had the great advantage of being in earnest, as well as thoroughly understanding the subject. The Edinburgh reviewer knew nothing of Hindoo history except what newspapers and pamphlets had taught him. . . . No wonder, therefore, that I should have the upper hand of such a man in the argument.

"Campbell's poem has disappointed his friends, Ballantyne tells me. It is, however, better than I expected, except in story, which is meagre. This gentleman, also, who is one of Wordsworth's abusers, has been nibbling at imitation, and palpably borrowed from the two poems of Ruth and The Brothers. 'Tis amusing envy! to see how the race of borrowers upon all occasions abuse us who do not borrow! The main topic against me is, that I do not imitate Virgil in my story, Pope in my language, &c. &c.

"Scott is still detained in London, and this will prevent me from going with him to Edinburgh. Indeed, if engagements had not existed, I could not

have left home now, for Edith will find it melancholy enough for some time to come with me, and without me it would be worse. Herbert, thank God, seems well; *seems* is all one dares say: of all precarious things there is nothing so precarious as life. You would have been delighted with your eldest niece if you could have seen the sorrow she was in this morning, for fear her mother should die for grief: and then she said she should die too, and then her papa would die for grief about her. Just now, Tom, it might have been happier for you and me if we had gone to bed as early as John and Eliza; a hundred years hence the advantage will be on our side. . . . My notions about life are much the same as they are about travelling, — there is a good deal of amusement on the road, but, after all, one wants to be at rest. Evils of this kind — if they may be called evils — soon cure themselves; the wound smarts, in a little while it heals, and, if the scar did not sometimes renew the recollection of the smart, it would, perhaps, be forgotten.

"My History gets on; the proof before me reaches to page 336.: I look at it with great pleasure. Whether I may live to complete the series of works which I have projected, and, in good part, executed, God only knows; be that as it may, in what is done I shall, to the best of my power, have on all occasions enforced good opinions upon those subjects which are of most importance to mankind.

"God bless you! It is long since I have heard from you; what can you be cruising after? Things

go on well in Spain, and will go on better when the Wellesleys get there. Once more, God bless you!

R. S."

In the preceding letter my father refers to an intention of accompanying Sir Walter Scott to Edinburgh; which could not be carried into effect, owing to the latter having been detained in London. While there, with characteristic friendliness, he had been using his influence in my father's behalf with his friends connected with the Government, and he now thus communicates to him his expectations of success, expressing his hope that they would still be able to travel in company to Scotland.

"I have much to say to you about the Quarterly Review, Rhadamanthus*, &c. I do not apprehend that there is any great risk of our politics differing when there are so many strings in unison, but it may doubtless happen. Meanwhile, every one is grateful for your curious and invaluable article: and this leads me to a subject which I would rather have spoken than written upon, but the doubt of seeing you obliges me to touch upon it. George Ellis and I have both seen a strong desire in Mr. Canning to be of service to you in any way within his power that could be pointed out, and this without any reference to political opinions. An official situation in his own department was vacant, and, I believe, still is so; but it occurred to George

* This refers to a scheme of my father's (which Ballantyne was at one time anxious to engage in) for a Review "to exclude all contemporary publications, and to select its subjects from all others." The plan, however, was never matured.

Ellis and me that the salary — 300*l.* a-year — was inadequate for an office occupying much time, and requiring constant attendance. But there are professors' chairs both in England and Scotland frequently vacant; and there is hardly one, except such as are absolutely professional, for which you are not either fitted already, or capable of making yourself so on a short notice. There are also diplomatic and other situations, should you prefer them to the groves of Academus. . . . Mr. Canning's opportunities to serve you will soon be numerous, or they will be gone altogether, for he is of a different mould from the rest of his colleagues, and a decided foe to those half measures which I know you detest as much as I do. It is not his fault that the cause of Spain is not at this moment triumphant. This I know, and there will come a time when the world will know it too. . . . . Think over the thing in your own mind, and let it, if possible, determine you on your northern journey. What would I not give to secure you a chair in our northern metropolis! . . . . I ought in conscience to have made ten thousand pretty detours about all this, and paid some glowing compliments both to the minister and the bard; but they may all be summed up by saying, in one sober word, that Mr. C. could not have entertained a thought more honourable to himself, and, knowing him as I do, I must add, more honourable and flattering to your genius and learning."*

My father's reply was as follows: —

* London, June 14. 1809.

To Walter Scott, Esq.

"Keswick, June 16. 1809.

"Dear Scott,

"My friends leave Bristol on Monday next, on their way hither; you thus perceive how impossible it is that I can now accompany you to Edinburgh, as I should else willingly have done.

"The latter part of your letter requires a confidential answer. I once wished to reside in Portugal, because the great object of my literary life related to that country: I loved the country, and had then an uncle settled there. Before Fox came into power this was told him by Charles Wynn, and, when he was in power, he was asked by Wynn to send me there. It so happened that John Allen wanted something which was in Lord Grenville's gift, and this was given him on condition that Fox, in return, provided for me. There were two things in Portugal which I could hold—the consulship, or the secretaryship of legation. The former was twice given away, but that Fox said was too good a thing for me; the latter he promised if an opportunity occurred of promoting Lord Strangford, and that never took place. Grey was reminded of his predecessor's engagement, and expressed no disinclination to fulfil it. The party got turned out; and one of the last things Lord Grenville did was to give me a pension of 200*l.* Till that time, I had received one of 160*l.* from Charles W. Wynn, my oldest surviving friend. The exchange leaves me something the poorer, as

the Exchequer deducts above sixty pounds. This is all I have. Half my time I sell to the booksellers; the other half is reserved for works which will never pay for the paper on which they are written, but on which I rest my future fame. I am, of course, straitened in circumstances; a little more would make me easy. My chance of inheritance is gone by: my father's elder brother was worth 40,000*l.*, but he cut me off without the slightest cause of offence.

"You will see by this that I would willingly be served, but it is not easy to serve me. Lisbon is too insecure a place to remove to with a family, and nothing could repay me for going without them. I have neither the habits nor talents for an official situation; nor, if I had, could I live in London, — that is, I should soon die there. I have said to Wynn that one thing would make me at ease for life, — create for me the title of Royal Historiographer for England (there is one for Scotland), with a salary of 400*l.*: the reduction would leave a net income of 278*l.*; with that I should be sure of all the decent comforts of life, and, for everything beyond them, it would then be easy to supply myself. Of course, my present pension would cease. Whether Mr. Canning can do this, I know not; but, if this could be done, it would be adequate to all I want, and beyond that my wishes have never extended. I am sorry we are not to meet, but it would be unreasonable to expect it now; and, at some more convenient season, I will find my way to you and to the Advocate's Library. You will hear from Bal-

lantyne what my plan is for Rhadamanthus, concerning which I shall think nothing more till I hear from him upon the subject. Since last you heard from me, I have lost one of my children; the rest, thank God! are well. Edith desires to be remembered to you and Mrs. Scott.

Believe me,
Yours very truly,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Walter Scott, Esq.

"Keswick, July 6. 1809.

"My dear Scott,

"I have just been informed that the stewardship for the Derwentwater estates (belonging to Greenwich Hospital), now held by a Mr. Walton, is expected soon to be vacated by his death. It is a situation which would give me a respectable income, perfectly suit my present place of abode, and not impose upon me more business than I could properly perform with comfort to myself. Mr. Sharp tells me this, and from him I learn that Mr. Long is one of the Directors. Could this be obtained for me I should be well provided for, and in a pleasant way; so I have thought it right to mention it, in consequence of your last letter, and having so done shall dismiss the subject from my thoughts. *Pelle timorem, spemque fugato,* is a lesson which I learnt early in life from Boethius, and have been a good deal the happier for practising.

"The second Quarterly is better than the first. The affairs of Austria are treated with great power, great spirit, and clear views. I expected the utter overthrow of the House of Austria, and my fears have happily been disappointed. They have profited by experience, and though everything is now upon the balance, and one cannot open the newspaper without great anxiety and many doubts, still it does appear that the chances are in our favour. One defeat will not destroy the Emperor, if he is only true to himself, but one defeat would destroy Bonaparte. His authority, out of France, is maintained wholly by force; in France by the opinion of his good fortune and the splendour of his successes. One thorough defeat will dissolve the spell. His colossal power then falls to pieces, like the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream. I am afraid our expedition will be too late to turn the scale. If it were now in Germany it might do wonders; but we are always slow in our measures, and game so timorously that we are sure to lose. Why not twice forty thousand men? It has been proved that we can always beat the French with equal numbers, or at any time when we are not previously out-numbered. Why then send a force that can so easily be doubled or trebled by the enemy? For allied armies cannot act together, and whatever battle we have to fight must be fought alone. Marlborough was the only general who could wield a confederacy.

"I have made offer of my services to Gifford to undertake Frere's justification against the friends of Sir John Moore, if it be thought advisable. I have

offered also to provide for the fourth Number a paper upon Methodism, — which would be in all things unlike Sidney Smith's, except in having as much dread of its progress. I should examine the causes of its progress, the principles in human nature to which it appeals, and by which it succeeds; its good and its evil; the means of preventing the one, and of obtaining the other at less risk; and instead of offending the whole religious public, as they call themselves, by indiscriminate ridicule, I should endeavour to show of what different parties that public is composed, how some of them may be conciliated and made useful, and others suppressed, — for there are limits which common sense must appoint to toleration.

"I have finished an English Eclogue, which is at Ballantyne's service, either for his Annual Register or his Minstrelsy, and which shall be transcribed and sent him forthwith. I have never yet thanked you for Lord Somers, a very acceptable addition to my library, — a very valuable collection, and made far more so by your arrangement and additions. I am sorry my life of D. Luisa de Carvajal is printed, or I would have offered it you, as worthy of being inserted among the Tracts of James I. time.

Believe me,

Yours very truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq., M.P.

"Keswick, July 8. 1809.

"My dear Wynn,

"You will be a little surprised to hear that Canning has expressed a wish to serve me, and that in consequence Walter Scott has been asked to communicate this to me, and find out in what manner it can be done conformably to my own inclinations. There was a situation of 300*l.* a year in his own department, which he would have offered; but that was rightly judged by himself, Scott, and Ellis to be inadequate to the expense of time and attendance which it required. So Scott wrote to mention to me professorships at the Universities, diplomatic situations, or any other thing which could be pointed out.

"Professorships in England are fenced about with subscription, and therefore unattainable by me. In Scotland I would accept one, if nothing more suitable could be found. The secretaryship in Portugal is now no longer desirable. My uncle has left that country, and the salary would not support me there. I am too old to begin the pursuit of fortune in that line, and nothing but the desire of becoming independent ever made me desirous of a situation for which I know myself in many points to be exceedingly unfit. The truth is, that I have found my way in the world, and am in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call me, and for which it has pleased him to qualify me. At the same time my means are certainly so straitened that I should very gladly

obtain an addition to them, if it could be obtained without changing the main stream of my pursuits.

"Now Sharp has told me that the Stewardship to Greenwich Hospital for the Derwentwater estates is expected soon to be vacated by the death of a Mr. Walton, and has advised me to apply for it. I have therefore written to Scott to tell him this; and I now write to you, well knowing that if you can be of use to me in this application, you will. What the value of this appointment is I do not know; Sharp fancies from 600*l.* to 800*l.* a year. If this be thought 'too good a thing for me,' as I dare say it will, the Cumberland estates might be divided from the Northumberland ones. Certes I should rather have the whole than half, — but better half a loaf than no bread. And now I have done all that is in my power to do; having thus found out a specific thing, asked for it, and written to you for your assistance, if you can give me any. Having done this, I dismiss the subject altogether from my thoughts. In this respect I have been truly a philosopher, that no hopes or fears, with respect to worldly fortune, have ever given me an hour's anxiety. God bless you!

R. S."

My father was the more desirous of obtaining this office, because the property included a large portion of country in the immediate vicinity of Keswick; and "it would give him the care of the woods, and the power of planting and beautifying." He accordingly did not cease his efforts with the foregoing letter,

but through several other friends secured still further interest, and all appeared to be in a fair train for ultimate success, when a further inquiry into the nature and extent of the duties required at once put a stop to the matter. Indeed, a more practical man would at once have perceived, that literary tastes and pursuits were hardly compatible with the management of a large and widely scattered property. The following pleasant account of the nature of the office from his friend, Mr. Bedford, seems almost ludicrous from the Protean qualities required.

"The present possessor, with all his knowledge, assiduity, and rapidity in the mode of transacting business, has always been employed for seventeen or eighteen hours out of twenty-four, together with his first clerk. The salary is about 700*l.* a year. The place of residence varies over a tract of country of about eighty miles. The Steward must be a perfect agriculturist, surveyor, mineralogist, and the best lawyer that, competently with these other characters, can be found; and lest his various duties should leave him any time for frivolous pursuits, it is in contemplation to raise up to him the seeds of controversy and quarrel; by associating with him some other person, who, under the pretence of sharing his labours, shall differ with him in all his opinions, without, perhaps, relieving him in any degree from the responsibility attached to the management of a revenue of 40,000*l.* per annum. Would you, if you might have it on demand, accept a place with all these circumstances attached to it? For my own part, I would rather live in a hollow tree all the sum-

mer, and die when the cold weather should set in, than undertake such an employment."

This, as might be expected, was a complete damper to my father's wishes, and, with one exception, here ended his attempts to obtain official employment.

To Walter Scott, Esq.

"Keswick, July 30. 1809.

"My dear Scott,

"Wordsworth's pamphlet will fail of producing any general effect, because the sentences are long and involved; and his friend, De Quincey, who corrected the press, has rendered them more obscure by an unusual system of punctuation. This fault will outweigh all its merits. The public never can like any thing which they feel it difficult to understand. They will affect to like it, as in the case of Burke, if the reputation of the writer be such that not to admire him is a confession of ignorance; but even in Burke's case, the public admiration was merely affected: his finer beauties were not remarked, and it was only his party politics that were generally understood, while the philosophy which he brought to their aid was heathen Greek to the multitude of his readers. I impute Wordsworth's want of perspicuity to two causes, — his admiration of Milton's prose, and his habit of dictating instead of writing: if he were his own scribe his eye would tell him

where to stop; but, in dictating, his own thoughts are to himself familiarly intelligible, and he goes on, unconscious either of the length of the sentence, or the difficulty a common reader must necessarily find in following its meaning to the end, and unravelling all its involutions.

"A villanous cold, which makes me sleep as late as I possibly can in the morning, because the moment I wake it wakes with me, has prevented me finishing Kehama: it would else, ere this, have been completed. I think of publishing it on my own account, in a pocket volume, of about 350 pages; but this is not yet determined. One of the pleasures which I had promised myself in seeing you was, that of showing you this wildest of all wild poems, believing that you will be one of the few persons who will relish it. The rhymes are as irregular as your own, but in a different key, and I expect to be abused for having given the language the freedom and strength of blank verse, though I pride myself upon the manner in which this is combined with rhyme.

"The Eclogue* which I have sent Ballantyne has suffered a little by having all its local allusions cut out. This was done lest what was intended as a general character should have been interpreted into individual satire. The thing was suggested by my accidentally crossing such a funeral some years ago at Bristol; and had I been disposed to personal satire, the hero of the procession would have afforded ample scope for it. As soon as he knew his case was des-

* The Alderman's Funeral.

perate he called together all the persons to whom he was indebted in his mercantile concerns; — 'Gentlemen,' said he, 'I am going to die, and my death will be an inconvenience to you, because it will be some time before you can get your accounts settled with my executors; now if you will allow me a handsome discount, I'll settle them myself at once.' They came into the proposal, and the old alderman turned his death into nine hundred pounds' profit.

"If Queen Orraca is not too long for the English Minstrelsy, I will with great pleasure send off a corrected copy for it.

Yours very truly,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Walter Scott, Esq.

"August 6. 1809.

"My dear Scott,

"The Quest is over; I believe the stewardship would have been promised to me had I been fit for it. All, therefore, that I have to regret is, having relied so implicitly upon Sharp's information, as to apply for the post, before I had thoroughly ascertained my own competency for it. This was only one blunder. Another was in supposing there was no English Historiographer, — old Dutens has had the office, with a salary of 400*l.*, for many years — upon what plea, they who gave it him can best tell. My aim must now be to succeed him, whenever he pleases to move off; obtaining, if possible, an increase of

salary, so as to make it equivalent to what it originally was; and towards this I hope some way is gained by what has already been done. I go to Lowther this day week, and according as I feel my footing, will contrive to have my views and wishes explained.

"There came last night a letter from Ellis, communicating the result of his conversation with Canning: I have thanked him for his friendly interference, and told him how things stand.

"I will do my best for Ballantyne *; and going to work with clear views of the subject, and a thorough knowledge of the Spanish and Portuguese character, I shall come to it with great advantages. That lamentable ground over which poor Sir J. Moore retreated (as one of his own officers expresses it) 'faster than flesh and blood could follow him,' I paced on foot, loitering along that my foot-pace might not outstrip a lazy coach and six, and my recollection of passes where five hundred Englishmen could have stopt an army, is as vivid as if I had just seen them. Bonaparte owes more to the blunders of his enemies than to his own abilities; and he has no surer allies than those writers who prepare our very generals to fear him, by constantly representing him as not to be conquered. Oh, for Peterborough! Oh, for a 'single hour of Dundee!' Sir John Moore was as brave a man as ever died in battle, but he had that fear upon him, — his imagination was cowed and intimidated though his heart was not. And now, be-

* See the beginning of the next chapter.

cause the Galicians did not turn out and expose themselves to certain destruction by attempting to protect an army whom he would not suffer to protect themselves, a party in this country are labouring to prove that we ought to abandon the Spaniards! Assuredly if I am to write the history of his campaign, not a syllable shall be set down in malice, but by Heaven I will nothing extenuate; the retreat shall be painted in its true colours of shame and horror, accurately to the very life, or rather the very death, for death it was, not only to the wretched women and children, who never should have been permitted to enter Spain, but to man and beast, — both marched till flesh and blood failed them, and the men broken-hearted to think that their lives were thus ignominiously wasted.

"If I thought you repeated the Retainer's wish in sober earnest, I could not in conscience wish your old Man of the Sea were off your shoulders; but I believe whenever he is laid down, doing what you please will be doing much, and that we shall have more Marmions and Williams of Deloraines. Lord Byron's waggery was new to me, and I cannot help wishing you may some day have an opportunity of giving him the retort as neatly as you have given it to Cumberland.

"I have fixed myself here by a lease of one and twenty years, which, after many weary procrastinations, was executed a few days ago.

"I had nearly forgotten to say something concerning Morte d'Arthur. It is now more than a year that I have been playing the dog in the manger to-

wards you; but the fault is not in me. Longman has been to blame in adjourning the printing the work *sine die*. I will in my next letter state to him that he is making me use you ill, and that if there be any further delay, I shall feel myself bound to throw up the business.

Yours very truly,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Lieut. Southey, H. M. S. Dreadnought.

"Sept. 19. 1809.

"My dear Tom,

"Poor Jackson is gone at last, after a cruel illness. I followed him to the grave to-day. A good man, to whom the town of Keswick and many of its inhabitants are greatly beholden. He has left Hartley 50*l.* to be paid when he comes of age. Had he thought of bequeathing him his books it would have been a more suitable remembrance. Never had man a more faithful, anxious, and indefatigable nurse than he has had in Mrs. Wilson, — always ready, always watchful, always willing, never uttering a complaint, never sparing herself; with the most disinterested affection; acting so entirely from the feelings of a good heart, that I do not believe even the thought of duty ever entered it. The night after his death we made her take a little spirit and water; it was not a tea-cupfull, but upon her it acted as medicine; and she told me the next day that, for the first time during two years, she had slept through the night.

He never turned in his bed during that whole time that she did not hear, nor did he make the slightest unusual sound or motion that she was not up to know what could be done for him. As you will readily suppose, I have long since told her never to think of quitting the place, but to remain here as long as she lives with people to whom she is attached (she doats upon Edith and Herbert), and who can understand her worth.

"Busy as it is usually my fortune to be, I was never so busy as now. Three mornings more will finish my transcribing task for the first volume of my History of Brazil, including a long chapter, which, I fear, can hardly be got into the volume, though I much wish to insert it. Then come the notes, — supplementary, — which might, with great pleasure to myself and profit to my reader, be extended to another volume as large; but I shall not allow them much more than fifty pages. The book, as a whole, is more amusing than was to be expected. About a fortnight's morning work will complete my work for it: 448 pages are printed; the whole will not be less than 660.

"Last night we had a prodigious flood, higher in some places than can be remembered; I say in some places, because the lake was previously low, and the force of the waters was spent before they found their way to it. Do you know the little bridge over what is usually a dry ditch at the beginning of the Church Lane? The water was over it, and three feet deep in the lane. Half Slacks Bridge is gone, a chaise-driver and horses lost between this place and Wigton,

and the corn washed away to a heavy amount. It was a tremendous night.

"I must not wish you to be paid off unless you could be sure of a better appointment than you have at present, or of not being appointed at all. As for peace, I see no hope of it, — no fear of it would be the better phrase. The Junta have mismanaged, and so have we; I know not whose mismanagement has been the worst. The army which has been wasted at Flushing would have recovered Spain: the Spaniards will now be left to do it their own way, by detail. What these changes at home will produce one cannot guess till it is known who is going out and who coming in. If Marquis Wellesley comes in, we may expect something. If Canning goes out, the candle will be taken out of the dark lantern. God bless you!

R. S."

To Walter Scott, Esq.

"Keswick, Oct. 2. 1809.

"My dear Scott,

"Before I had leisure to thank you for your own letter and for Ellis's, and for all that there is therein, a new game of puss-catch-corner has been commenced at Westminster, and Canning has done the most foolish thing he ever did in his life. He should have remembered that Lord Castlereagh was an Irishman, and that, as the Union abolished the Irish parliament, so ought the ill customs of that parliament — duelling

being one — to have been abolished with it; that, holding his rank and station in the country, it was as much a breach of decency in him to accept a challenge as it would have been in an archbishop; and that he might have done more by his example towards checking a mischievous and absurd practice than has ever been done yet. He got much credit by replying to the Russian manifesto, and he would have got more by a proper reply to Castlereagh. A single combat had some sense in it; there you relied upon your own heart and hand: there was some pleasure in hewing and thrusting, and the bravest came off best; but as for our duels, all that has been said against villanous gunpowder holds true against them.

"I wish to see Marquis Wellesley in power, because we want an enterprising Minister, — one who would make the enemy feel the mighty power of Great Britain, and not waste our force so pitifully as it has always hitherto been wasted. I wish to see him in power, because he has not been tried, and all the other performers upon the Westminster stage have. But I confess there is but little hope in my wishes. It appears to me that the very constitution of our cabinet necessarily produces indecision, half-measures, and imbecility; it seems to me that a government so constituted is just like an army, all whose operations are guided by a council of war instead of a general. I am for ministerial dictatorships.

"Your views about the Morte d'Arthur are wiser ones than mine. I do most formally and willingly

resign it into your hands. My intent was, that the book should be read; but people are not disposed to read such things generally, or the Cid would not hang upon hand. Now a very limited edition is sure to find purchasers, and nothing need be sacrificed to ensure success. I was not, by-the-by, aware that the book had been reformed by the godly critics whose worthy descendants have lately set forth a Family Shakspeare, and will, it is to be hoped, in due time present us with an Edition Expurgate of the Bible, upon the plan by Matthew Lewis. I have a bill of indictment against those Eclectics and Vice-Society men, whenever Murray will send me the needful documents; for, be it known unto you, that, in one of the Eclectic Reviews, there is a grand passage, describing the *soul of Shakspeare in hell.* If I do not put some of those Pharisees into purgatory for this, for the edification of our Quarterly readers, then may my right hand forget its cunning.

"I have not seen the last Review, which makes me suppose that Murray is still on his journey. These Quarterly Reviews lose much by giving up all those minor publications, which served to play shuttlecock with, and were put to death with a pun, or served up in the sauce of their own humorous absurdity. Hence, too, they are less valuable as materials for the history of literature. The old Annual's was the best plan, if it had not been starved by scanty pay, and, moreover, choked with divinity.

"My next Missionary Article, when I have time to write it, will be singularly curious: it will relate

to South Africa; and I shall obtain from my uncle a manuscript of D'Anville's concerning the Portuguese possessions there, and his plan for establishing a communication by land between them.

"I want to hear that you have planned another poem, and commenced it. For myself, I shall begin with Pelayo, the Spaniard, as soon as I can make up my mind in what metre to write it. That of Kehama, though in rhyme, is almost as much my own as Thalaba, and will, I dare say, excite as much censure.

Yours very truly,
R. SOUTHEY."

To Mr. Neville White.

"Keswick, October 10. 1809.

"My dear Neville,

"Thank you for the books; they arrived yesterday, and I have gone through about three-fourths of Dr. Collyer's lectures. I have more respect for the Independents than for any other body of Christians, the Quakers excepted. . . . Their English history is without a blot. Their American has, unhappily, some bloody ones, which you will see noticed in the next number of the Quarterly, if my reviewal of Holmes's American Annals should appear there in un unmutilated state. Dr. Collyer's is, certainly, an able book; yet he is better calculated to produce effect from the pulpit than in the study. Those parts of his Lectures which are most ornamental,

and, doubtless, the most popular in delivery, are usually extraneous to the main subject in hand. All his congregations would fairly say 'What a fine discourse!' to every sermon; but, when the whole are read collectively, they do not exhibit that clear and connected view of prophecy which is what he should have aimed at. There is, perhaps, hardly any subject which requires so much erudition, and so constant an exertion of sound judgment. The Doctor's learning is not extensive; he quotes from books of little authority, and never refers to those which are of most importance. Indeed, he does not appear to know what the Germans have done in Biblical criticism.'

"... It has occurred to me that it would add to the interest of the Remains, if the name under the portrait were made a fac-simile of Henry's handwriting. Since I wrote to you, I fell in with Dr. Milner, the Dean of Carlisle, who talked to me about Henry; how little he had known of him, and how much he regretted that he should not have known him more. I told him what you were doing with James, expressing a hope that he might find friends at Cambridge, for his brother's sake as well as his own, which he thought would certainly be the case.

... "We thank you for Miss Smith's book, a very, very interesting one. There are better translations of some of Klopstock's odes in the Monthly Magazine, where, also, is to be found a full account of the Messiah, with extracts translated by my very able

and excellent friend, William Taylor, of Norwich. Coleridge and Wordsworth visited Klopstock in the year 1797: he wore a great wig. Klopstock in a wig, they said, was something like *Mr.* Milton. His Life will always retain its interest; his fame as a poet will not be lasting. . . . . In Germany, his day of reputation is already passing away. There is no other country where the principle of criticism is so well understood. But one loves Klopstock as well as if he had been really the poet that his admirers believe him to be; and his wife was as much an angel as she could be while on earth. . .

" God bless you!

R. S."

Mr. Coleridge, who was at this time residing at Grasmere, had lately commenced the publication of *The Friend*, which came out in weekly numbers; and, becoming apprehensive that it was not altogether well calculated to find favour with the class of readers likely to take in a periodical work, he now wrote to my father, requesting him to address such a letter to him in his *Friendly* character as might afford him a good plea for justifying the form and style of the paper in question.

Both the request and the reply to it will be interesting to the reader, especially as the Friend, however unattractive to the popular mind as a periodical, has, like the Spectator and the Rambler, taken a permanent place among the works of its author and the literature of the nation.

S. T. Coleridge to R. Southey.

"October 20. 1809.

"My dear Southey,

"..... What really makes me despond is the daily confirmation I receive of my original apprehension, that the plan and execution of *The Friend* is so utterly unsuitable to the public taste as to preclude all rational hopes of its success. Much, certainly, might have been done to have made the former numbers less so, by the interposition of others written more expressly for general interest; and, if I could attribute it wholly to any removable error of my own, I should be less dejected. I will do my best, will frequently interpose tales and whole numbers of amusement, will make the periods lighter and shorter; and the work itself, proceeding according to its plan, will become more interesting when the foundations have been laid. Massiveness is the merit of a foundation; the gilding, ornaments, stucco-work, conveniences, sunshine, and sunny prospects will come with the superstructure. Yet still I feel the deepest conviction that no efforts of mine, compatible with the hope of effecting any good purpose, or with the duty I owe to my permanent reputation, will remove the complaint. No real information can be conveyed, no important errors radically extracted, without demanding an effort of thought on the part of the reader; but the obstinate, and now contemptuous, aversion to all energy of thinking is the mother evil, the cause of all the evils in politics, morals, and lite-

rature, which it is my object to wage war against; so that I am like a physician who, for a patient paralytic in both arms, prescribes, as the only possible cure, the use of the dumb-bells. Whatever I publish, and in whatever form, this obstacle will be felt. The Rambler, which, altogether, has sold a hundred copies for one of the Connoisseur, yet, during its periodical appearance, did not sell one for fifty, and was dropped by reader after reader for its dreary gravity and massiveness of manner. Now, what I wish you to do for me,—if, amid your many labours, you can find or make a leisure hour—is, to look over the eight numbers, and to write a letter to The Friend in a lively style, chiefly urging, in a humorous manner, my Don Quixotism in expecting that the public will ever pretend to understand my lucubrations, or feel any interest in subjects of such sad and unkempt antiquity, and contrasting my style with the cementless periods of the modern Anglo-Gallican style, which not only are understood *beforehand*, but, being free from all connections of logic, all the hooks and eyes of intellectual memory, never oppress the mind by any after recollections, but, like civil visitors, stay a few moments, and leave the room quite free and open for the next comers. Something of this kind, I mean, that I may be able to answer it so as, in the answer, to state my own convictions at full on the nature of obscurity, &c. . . .

"God bless you!

S. T. COLERIDGE."

To S. T. Coleridge, Esq.

"TO THE FRIEND.

[Without date.]

"Sir,

"I know not whether your subscribers have expected too much from you, but it appears to me that you expect too much from your subscribers; and that, however accurately you may understand the diseases of the age, you have certainly mistaken its temper. In the first place, Sir, your essays are too long. 'Brevity,' says a contemporary journalist, 'is the humour of the times; a tragedy must not exceed fifteen hundred lines, a fashionable preacher must not trespass above fifteen minutes upon his congregation. We have short waistcoats and short campaigns; everything must be short — except lawsuits, speeches in Parliament, and tax-tables.' It is expressly stated, in the prospectus of a collection of extracts, called the Beauties of Sentiment, that the extracts shall always be complete sense, and *not very long*. Secondly, Sir, though your essays appear in so tempting a shape to a lounger, the very fiends themselves were not more deceived by the *lignum vitæ* apples, when

> 'They, fondly thinking to allay
> Their appetite with gust, instead of fruit
> Chew'd bitter ashes,'

than the reader is who takes up one of your papers from breakfast table, parlour-window, sofa, or ottoman, thinking to amuse himself with a few minutes',

light reading. We are informed, upon the authority of no less a man than Sir Richard Phillips, how 'it has long been a subject of just complaint among the lovers of English literature, that our language has been deficient in lounging or parlour-window books;' and to remove the opprobrium from the language, Sir Richard advertises a list, mostly ending in *ana*, under the general title of 'Lounging Books or Light Reading.' I am afraid, Mr. Friend, that your predecessors would never have obtained their popularity unless their essays had been of the description Ὅμοιον ὁμοίῳ φίλον,—and this is a light age.

"You have yourself observed that few converts were made by Burke; but the cause which you have assigned does not sufficiently explain why a man of such powerful talents and so authoritative a reputation should have produced so little an effect upon the minds of the people. Was it not because he neither was nor could be generally understood? Because, instead of endeavouring to make difficult things easy of comprehension, he made things which were easy in themselves, difficult to be comprehended by the manner in which he presented them, evolving their causes and involving their consequences, till the reader whose mind was not habituated to metaphysical discussions, neither knew in what his arguments began nor in what they ended? You have told me that the straightest line must be the shortest; but do not you yourself sometimes nose out your way, hound-like, in pursuit of truth, turning and winding, and doubling and running when the same object might be reached in a tenth part of the time

by darting straightforward like a greyhound to the mark? Burke failed of effect upon the people for this reason, — there was the difficulty of mathematics without the precision in his writings. You looked through the process without arriving at the proof. It was the fashion to read him because of his rank as a political partizan; otherwise he would not have been read. Even in the House of Commons he was admired more than he was listened to; not a sentence came from him which was not pregnant with seeds of thought, if it had fallen upon good ground; yet his speeches convinced nobody, while the mellifluous orations of Mr. Pitt persuaded his majorities of whatever he wished to persuade them; because they were easily understood, what mattered it to him that they were as easily forgotten?

"The reader, Sir, must think before he can understand you; is it not a little unreasonable to require from him an effort which you have yourself described as so very painful a one? and is not this effort not merely difficult but in many cases impossible? All brains, Sir, were not made for thinking: modern philosophy has taught us that they are galvanic machines, and thinking is only an accident belonging to them. Intellect is not essential to the functions of life; in the ordinary course of society it is very commonly dispensed with; and we have lived, Mr. Friend, to witness experiments for carrying on government without it. This is surely a proof that it is a rare commodity; and yet you expect it in all your subscribers!

"Give us your moral medicines in a more elegant preparation.' The Reverend J. Gentle administers his physic in the form of tea; Dr. Solomon prefers the medium of a cordial; Mr. Ching exhibits his in gingerbread nuts; Dr. Barton in wine; but you, Mr. Friend, come with a tonic bolus, bitter in the mouth, difficult to swallow, and hard of digestion.

"My dear Coleridge,

"All this, were it not for the Sir and the Mr. Friend, is like a real letter from me to you: I fell into the strain without intending it, and would not send it were it not to show you that I have attempted to do something. From jest I got into earnest, and, trying to pass from earnest to jest failed. It was against the grain, and would not do. I had re-read the eight last numbers, and the truth is, they left me no heart for jesting or for irony. In time they will do their work; it is the form of publication only that is unlucky, and that cannot now be remedied. But this evil is merely temporary. Give two or three amusing numbers, and you will hear of admiration from every side. Insert a few more poems,— any that you have, except Christabel, for that is of too much value. There is scarcely anything you could do which would excite so much notice as if you were *now* to write the character of Bonaparte, announced in former times for 'to-morrow,' and to-morrow and to-morrow; and I think it would do good by counteracting that base spirit of condescension towards him, which I am

afraid is gaining ground; and by showing the people what grounds they have for hope.

"God bless you!

"R. S."

To Mr. Ebenezer Elliott.

"Keswick, Nov. 22. 1809.

"My dear Sir,

"I have had your poem little more than a week: yesterday I carefully perused it (not having had leisure before), and should this evening have written to you, even if your letter had not arrived.

"There are in this poem (which appears to me an alteration of that whereof you formerly sent me an extract) unquestionable marks both of genius and the power of expressing it. I have no doubt that you will succeed in attaining the fame after which you aspire; but you have yet to learn how to plan a poem; when you acquire this, I am sure you will be able to execute it.

"This is my advice to you. Lay this poem aside as one whose defects are incurable. Plan another, and be especially careful in planning it. See that your circumstances naturally produce each other, and that there be nothing in the story which could be taken away without dislocating the whole fabric. Ask yourself the question, is this incident of any use? does it result from what goes before? does it influence what is to follow? is it a fruit or an excrescence? Satisfy yourself completely with the plan.

before you begin to execute it. I do not mean to say that the detail must be filled up, only make the skeleton perfect. There is no danger of your getting into the fault of common-place authors, otherwise I would recommend you to read some of the bad epic writers, for the sake of learning what to avoid in the composition of a story.

"In your execution you are too exuberant in ornament, and resemble the French engravers, who take off the attention from the subject of their prints by the flowers and trappings of the foreground. This makes you indistinct; but distinctness is the great charm of narrative poetry: see how beautifully it is exemplified in Spencer, our great English master of narrative, whom you cannot study too much, nor love too dearly. Your first book reminded me of an old pastoral poet—William Brown: he has the same fault of burying his story in flowers; it is one of those faults which are to be wished for in the writings of all young poets. I am satisfied that your turn of thought and feeling is for the higher branch of the art, and not for lighter subjects. Your language would well suit the drama: have your thoughts ever been turned to it?

. . . . . .

"If, when you have planned another poem, you think proper to send me the plan, I will comment upon it, while it may be of use to point out its defects. It would give me great pleasure to be of any service to a man of genius, and such I believe you to be. If business ever brings you this way, let me see you. Should I ever travel through Rotherham, I

will find you out. I have spoken so plainly and freely of your defects, that you can have no doubt of my sincerity when I conclude by saying go on and you will prosper.

"Yours respectfully, and with the best wishes,

R. SOUTHEY.

"One thing more: forget this poem while you are planning another, lest you spoil that for the sake of appropriating materials from this."

To Lieut. Southey, H.M.S. Lyra.

"Nov. 25. 1809.

"My dear Tom,

"I write to you for two reasons . . . . . ; the other, a more interesting one, is to tell you that I have this day finished Kehama, having written two hundred lines since yesterday morning. Huzza, Aballiboozobanganorribo'!* It is not often in his lifetime a man finishes a long poem, and as I have nobody to give me joy, I must give myself joy. 24 sections, 4844 lines; 200 or 300 more will probably be added in course of correction and transcription; all has been done before breakfast (since its resumption) except about 170 lines of the conclusion. Huzza! better than lying a-bed, Tom; and though I am not quite ready to begin another, I will rise as usual to-morrow, and work at the plans of Pelayo and Robin Hood. And now I am a little impatient that you should see the whole, and shall feel another job off

* See The Doctor, &c.

my hands when your copy is completed. By beginning earlier with the next poem, I shall be able to keep pace with it, and send it to you as fast as it proceeds.

. . . . . .

"Very very few persons will like Kehama; everybody will wonder at it; it will increase my reputation without increasing my popularity: a general remark will be, what a pity that I have wasted so much power. I care little about this, having in the main pleased myself, and all along amused myself; every generation will afford me some half dozen admirers of it, and the everlasting column of Dante's fame does not stand upon a wider base. There will be a good many minor ornaments to insert, the metre will in many places be enriched, and the story perhaps sometimes be rendered more perspicuous. Now that the whole is before me, I can see where to add and alter. If it receives half the improvements which Thalaba did, I shall be well content.

"Pelayo is to be in blank verse: where the whole interest is to be derived from human character and the inherent dignity of the story, I will not run the hazard of enfeebling the finer parts for the sake of embellishing the weaker ones. I shall pitch Robin Hood in a different key, — such as the name would lead one to expect,—a wild pastoral movement, in the same sort of plastic metre as Garci Ferrandez.* I shall aim it at about 2000 lines, and endeavour not to exceed 3000.

"The state of home politics is perfectly hopeless. Bonaparte seems thoroughly to despise all we can do; all that we have done he is certainly entitled to

* Poems, p. 441.

despise; but if we had Marlborough or Peterborough alive again, six months would close his career for ever even now. It remains to be seen whether he despises the Spaniards enough to let things go on in their present course, or if he will enter Spain again and overrun the open country. In that case there is a line of large towns between Barcelona and Cadiz, along the coast, some of which may be expected to hold out like Zaragoza and Gerona, which we could assist by sea, and which would afford opportunities for such men as Cochrane or Sir S. Smith grievously to annoy the besiegers,—indeed to cut them off if they had a good force. There ought to be four flying squadrons of 5000 men, each ready to land wherever they were wanted; under Cochrane they would keep five times their number of French in continual alarm. The only possible hope from the Marquis Wellesley is, that he may insist on a vigorous effort; what we are doing now is just worse than nothing. Our men drink themselves to death; our officers learn to despise the Spaniards and Portuguese, because they do not dress, eat, and drink like themselves; and their opinions pass current here in England; and the consequence is, that never were a people so cruelly and basely calumniated as this nation, which has done more against the powers of France, and under every possible disadvantage, than all the rest of Europe conjointly. What a different story Sir Robert Wilson would tell, who has kept the field with his legion of Portuguese, through all the perilous season!

. . . . . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

CHAPTER XVI.

ENGAGEMENT WITH BALLANTYNE FOR THE EDINBURGH ANNUAL REGISTER. — RODERICK BEGUN. — PROFESSOR WILSON. — DE QUINCEY. — THE FRIEND. — POLITICS. — MADOC DEFENDED. — MONTHLY REVIEW. — LORD BYRON. — WILLIAM ROBERTS. — REVIEW OF THE MISSIONARIES. — HISTORY OF BRAZIL. — DECLINING LOVE OF POETICAL COMPOSITION. — THE LADY OF THE LAKE. — ROMANISM IN ENGLAND. — POEM OF MR. E. ELLIOTT'S CRITICISED. — PORTUGUESE LITERATURE. — EDINBURGH ANNUAL REGISTER. — SPANISH AFFAIRS. — DOUBTS ABOUT THE METRE OF KEHAMA. — OLIVER NEWMAN PROJECTED. — KEHAMA. — COMPARATIVE MERITS OF SPENCER AND CHAUCER. — EVIL OF LARGE LANDED PROPRIETORS. — REMARKS ON WRITING FOR THE STAGE. — LANDOR'S COUNT JULIAN. — POLITICAL VIEWS. — GIFFORD WISHES TO SERVE HIM. — PROGRESS OF THE REGISTER. — L. GOLDSMITH'S BOOK ABOUT FRANCE. — PASLEY'S ESSAY. — NEW REVIEW PROJECTED. — DEATH OF HIS UNCLE THOMAS SOUTHEY. — LUCIEN BONAPARTE. — DOMESTIC HAPPINESS. — SPANISH WAR. — LOVE FOR FLOWERS. — 1810—1811.

THE reader may probably have observed, that for a considerable period comparatively but little mention has occurred in my father's letters of his long projected History of Portugal, the materials for which had been collected with so much pains and expense, and which he had fondly hoped to make one of the chief pillars of his reputation.

For this there were several causes; but the chief one, and the one which lasted till his labours closed,

was the necessity of his giving up the chief of his time to periodical writing,—the only literary labour which could be said to be in any way adequately and fairly remunerated. The Quarterly Review had taken the place of the Annual, and he now entered upon another engagement of much greater magnitude.

At the close of the year 1808, James Ballantyne, the Edinburgh publisher, with whom he had previously had some communication, sent him the prospectus of an Annual Register, which was about to be commenced under favourable auspices, and with a fair list of literary contributors, soliciting his co-operation both in verse and prose.

He accordingly sent some trifling contributions of the former kind, and the matter rested thus until the following August, when Ballantyne again wrote to him, at first wishing him to write the history of Spanish affairs for the past year, and very shortly afterwards, being disappointed by the person who had engaged to write the History of Europe, he urged him to take the historical department generally, at the annual payment of 400*l.*

This was a work of no small labour, and the year already so far advanced, that more than common industry and speed were required; on this head, however, the publishers had no cause to complain, and, indeed, they appeared well satisfied with their "historiographer" in every way, though sometimes a little startled with the fearless manner in which he expressed his opinions on the various political subjects that came before him; and they were very desirous

of securing his further services in the miscellaneous volume.

This engagement, while it lasted, was the most profitable which had yet been offered to him; neither was it as distasteful to him then as it would have been in less stirring times, the events in Spain being a subject in which he took "as deep an interest as the heart of man is capable of;" and he moreover contemplated the compilation of an accurate body of contemporaneous history, which might hereafter become a standard work of reference, and which would thus have a value far beyond that of the ordinary periodical literature of the day.

Still, however this might be, he could not but feel that, with works demanding far deeper research, admitting the fullest exercise of his powers, and requiring literary stores which at that time he alone possessed, lying on his shelves half finished, the time thus taken up was but unworthily occupied. But he lived in hope,—in hopes that in time he would be enabled to live by the worthier labours of his busy pen, that works of solid and lasting merit would take their fitting place in the estimation of the public, and that his unrelenting studies would at length find their reward. How far these hopes were fulfilled or disappointed we have yet to see.

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Jan. 21. 1810.

"My dear Rickman.

"I am one of those lucky people who find their business their amusement, and contrive to do more by having half a dozen things in hand at once than if employed upon any single one of them. . . . . You will like what I have said concerning the Catholic question*, and not dislike the way in which I have discharged a little of my gall upon the Foxites, the place-mongers, and Mr. Whitbread. This is a very profitable engagement. They give me 400*l.* for it; and if it continues two or three years (which I believe rests wholly with myself), it will make me altogether at ease in my circumstances, for by that time my property in Longman's hands will have cleared itself, the constable will come up with me, and we shall travel on, I trust, to the end of our journey cheek by jowl, even if I should not be able to send him forward like a running footman.

The Quarterly pays me well — ten guineas per sheet: at the same measure, the Annual was only four. I have the bulky Life of Nelson in hand, and am to be paid double. This must be for the sake of saying they give twenty guineas per sheet, as I should have been well satisfied with ten, and have taken exactly the same pains. . . . . .

"The next news of my grey goose quill is, that I have one quarto just coming out of the press for you.

* In the Edinburgh Annual Register.

I have another just going in for Mrs. Rickman, though I suspect it will be less to her taste than any of my former poems. Kehama has been finished these two months, is more than half transcribed, and the first part ought to have reached Ballantyne's a month ago, but those rascally carriers have delayed or lost it. The days are now sufficiently lengthened to give me some half hour before breakfast, and I have begun Pelayo, conquered the difficulty of the opening, and am fairly afloat. Add to all this, that from the overflowings of my notes and notanda I am putting together some volumes of *Omniana* (which will, I have no doubt, pay better than any of the works of which they are in the main, as it were, the crumbs and leavings), and then you will have the catalogue of my works in hand. . . . .

"*Mathetes* is not De Quincey, but a Mr. Wilson,—De Quincey is a singular man, but better informed than any person almost that I ever met at his age. The vice of the Friend is its roundaboutness. Sometimes it is of the highest merit both in matter and manner: more frequently its turnings, and windings, and twistings, and doublings provoke my greyhound propensity of pointing straightforward to the mark.

The Coalition* which you seem to look on, is

* "If Lord Grenville consent to leave the experiment (of establishing Romanism in Ireland) untried, I do not see what should hinder him from joining with Lord Wellesley, Perceval, and Canning in forming a stronger government than the present; and I should the less wonder at it, as one may suppose that all the Tantarararas . . . . are bodily frightened at the remarkable progress of Cobbetism, built on the late disasters of our armies, though I cannot consent to wish the battle of Talavera unfought, that having established that there is some truth in the old opinion of the bravery of the British, who that day, even by confession of the enemy, were not half their numbers." —*J. R. to R. S.*, Jan. 14. 1810.

likely enough to take place; if it should, and Dutens were to die, I might be the better for it; the country would not. The journey to Falmouth seems the best prospect; and yet, at my time of life (the grey hairs are coming), and with my habits, it would be much more agreeable to me to stay at home. I have no hope from chopping and changing, while the materials must remain the same. It signifies little who plays the first fiddle. Tantararara will always be the tune, till there be an entirely new set of performers.

God bless you!

R. S."

To Mr. Ebenezer Elliott.

"Keswick, Feb. 9. 1810.

"The objections which have been made to the style of Madoc are ill-founded. It has no other peculiarity than that of being pure English, which, unhappily, in these times renders it peculiar. My rule of writing, whether for prose or verse, is the same, and may very shortly be stated. It is, to express myself, 1st, as perspicuously as possible; 2nd, as concisely as possible; 3rd, as impressively as possible. This is the way to be understood, and felt, and remembered. But there is an obtuseness of heart and understanding, which it is impossible to reach; and if you have seen the reviewals of Madoc, after having read the poem, you will perceive that almost in every part or passage which they have selected for censure, they have missed the meaning. For instance, the

Edinburgh sneers at the beginning of the 3d section, part II.*, and the words 'my own dear mother's child,' as inane.

"Now, as for the speech itself, if —— had not good feeling enough in his nature to feel its dramatic truth and fitness in that place, it is his misfortune; but that particular expression would, to any person who reflected upon its meaning with a moment's due attention, give it peculiar force; for in that state of society, most of the king's children were by different mothers. Of course, when Madoc addressed his sister as his mother's child, more affecting remembrances and more love were implied in that single expression, than a whole speech could convey with equal expressiveness. The Eclectic ridicules 'Wilt thou come hither, prince, and let me feel thy face?'† I am utterly ignorant of the nature and essence of poetry, if that be not one of the finest scenes that I have ever been able to produce.

"The metre has been criticised with equal incapacity on the part of the critics. Milton and Shakspeare are the standards of blank verse: in these writers every variety of it is to be found, and by this standard I desire to be measured. The redundant verses (when the redundant syllable is anywhere but

* "'Not yet at rest, my sister!' quoth the prince,
As at her dwelling door he saw the maid
Sit gazing on that lovely moonlight scene;
'To bed, Goervyl! Dearest, what hast thou
To keep thee wakeful here at this late hour,
When even I shall bid a truce to thought,
And lay me down in peace? Good night, Goervyl,
Dear sister mine, my own dear mother's child!'"

† Madoc, Part I. Section 3. This passage is too long for extraction here.

at the end of a line) are formed upon the admitted principle, that two short syllables are equal in time to one long one. The truth is, that though the knack of versifying is a gift, the art is an acquirement. I versified more rapidly at the age of sixteen, than now at six-and-thirty. But it requires a knowledge of that art to criticise upon the structure of verse; nor is it sufficient to understand the regular turn of the metre: a parrot might be taught that. In the sweep of blank verse, the whole paragraph must be taken into consideration before the merit or demerit of a single line, or sometimes of a single word, can be understood. Yet these critics are everlastingly picking out single lines, and condemning their cadence as bad. This might be true if the line could possibly stand alone. But were I to cut off one of the critic's fingers, and tell him it was only fit for a tobacco-stopper, that would be true also, because the act of amputation made it so.

"You appreciate the story with true judgment, and have laid your finger upon the faulty parts. This it is to have the inborn feeling of a poet. Of the language you are not so good a judge, because you have not mastered the art, and are not well read in the poets of Shakspeare's age. You cannot read Shakspeare, Spenser, Milton, and the Elizabethan dramatists too much. There is no danger of catching their faults.

Yours very truly,

R. SOUTHEY."

To Mr. Neville White.

"Keswick, March 11. 1810.

"My dear Sir,

"Your account of the Monthly Review interested me very much. If they rest the truth of their criticism upon that school poem in plain, direct, *tangible* language, I will most assuredly favour them with a few lines, first through the medium of as many magazines as we can get access to, and ultimately in a note to the Life. With regard to my own works, I am a perfect Quaker, and fools and rogues may misrepresent and libel them in perfect security; but upon the subject of Henry, the M. Review shall find me a very Tartar.

"Till you informed me of it, I did not know that Lord Byron had amused himself with lampooning me. It is safe game, and he may go on till he is tired. Every apprentice in satire and scandal for the last dozen years has tried his hand upon me. I got hold of the Simpliciad the other day, and wrote as a motto in it these lines, from one of Davenant's plays which I happened to have just been reading:—

> 'Libels of such weak fancy and composure,
> That we do all esteem it greater wrong
> To have our names extant in such paltry rhyme
> Than in the slanderous sense.'

"The manner in which these rhymesters and prosesters misunderstand what they criticise, would be altogether ludicrous, if it did not proceed as often from want of feeling as from want of intellect."

"I want your assistance in a business in which I am sure it will interest you to give it. A youth of Bristol, by name William Roberts, died of consumption about two years ago, at the age of nineteen. He was employed in a bank, and his salary, 70*l.* a year (I believe), was materially useful in assisting towards the support of his father and mother, and a grandmother, and one only sister. The family had known better days . . . . . and one calamity following another, has reduced them very greatly. Yet still there remains that feeling which, if I call it pride, it is only for want of a better word to express something noble in its nature. William was a youth of great genius, and a few days before his death he bequeathed his poems in trust to his two intimate friends to be published for the benefit of his sister, that being all he had to bequeath, and his passionate desire (like that of Chatterton) was to provide for her. You must remember that at that time he did not foresee the subsequent distresses of his father and mother. These friends were a young physician of the name of Hogg, settled somewhere near London, and James, a banker of Birmingham, an acquaintance of mine, the author of that sweet poem upon the Otaheitean Girl, of which some stanzas were quoted in the third Quarterly Review. James has arranged the poems and letters of the poor fellow for the press, and will draw up a biographical memoir. He has consulted me upon the subject, and the plain statement which I have here made of the circumstances has interested me very deeply . . . . My

opinion is that great things might have been done by William Roberts; that every one will acknowledge this; but that his Remains will not obtain a general sale. Of Henry's I foresaw the success as much as such a thing could be foreseen. But Roberts has left nothing so good as Henry's best pieces; in fact he died younger, and was precluded from the possibility of advancing himself as Henry did, in choosing a learned profession because his salary was wanted at home. There is another reason too against their general sale; though he was most exemplary in all his duties, and, as far as I can discover, absolutely without a spot or blemish upon his character, and a regular and sincere churchman, there is nothing of that kind of piety in his writings to which the Remains are mostly indebted for their popularity.

. . . . . .

"My hope is that such a sum may be raised as will be sufficient to place Eliza Roberts in a situation respectably to support herself and her parents. I do not yet know what extent the publication will run to, but as soon as this is settled, I will beg you to *beg* subscriptions. . . . . This whole account is written with such a cautious fear of saying too much, that I fear I have said too little, and may unwittingly have led you to think slightingly of what poor William Roberts has left behind him. If I have done this I have done wrong, for certainly he was a youth of great genius and most uncommon promise, which it is my firm belief, founded upon the purity of his life and principles and the rectitude of his feelings, that he would amply have fulfilled, if it had not

pleased God to remove him so early from this sphere of existence.

"God bless you!

Yours affectionately,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Sharon Turner, Esq.

"March 20, 1810.

"Dear Turner,

"I thank you for your little volume, which I have read with pleasure, as the faithful transcript of a good man's mind. It contains ample proof that you possess the perceptions of a poet; and if the diction in which they are clothed has sometimes its defects, it is because you have been too laboriously employed in more dignified pursuits to have had leisure for maturing the mechanical part of an art which, of all other trades or professions, requires the longest apprenticeship.

"What I have written upon the Missionaries I well knew would accord with your feelings and opinions. I have not yet done with the subject, meaning, so soon as my many occupations will allow, to prepare an article upon the South African missions; and, perhaps, to go on at intervals till I have given a view of all the existing Protestant missions; proved my own firm belief that there are but two methods of extending civilisation, — conquest and conversion, — the latter the only certain one; entered fully into the difficulties which oppose the

reception of Christianity; and, finally, connected this subject with that of civilisation.

"I had given Canning credit for the Austrian article, though half suspecting that it was giving him credit for too much, because there was a reference to the principles of human nature and a sense of its dignity rarely, or never, to be found in a politician by trade. The Quarterly does well; but it would do far better if it was emancipated from the shackles of party. It wants also some recondite learning: you should give them an account of the Welsh Archaiology; or, if that be too laborious, should take some of the Welshmen's publications, Davies or Roberts, for your text, and pour out from your full stores. . . . .

"You will receive the first volume of my greatest labours very shortly; for, after many provoking delays, it has at last got out of the printer's hands. It is less interesting perhaps than the second volume will prove, or than the history of the mother country; but it will repay perusal, and you will find many valuable hints respecting savage life. I have a poem also in the press, which you will wonder at and abuse. It is, in my own judgment, a successful attempt at giving to rhyme the whole freedom, and more than the variety, of blank verse. But in all its structure and story it is so wholly unlike anything else, that I expect to have very few admirers. This has been a sort of episode to my main employments. . . . . What I am busied upon most intently is the historical part of Ballantyne's new Annual Register. The perfect freedom and perfect

sincerity with which I am discharging this task has astonished Ballantyne, and I dare say he will find his account in it; for, sure I am, the veriest knave will feel that it is written with honesty. . . . . This evening I have finished the siege of Zaragoza, and my pulse has not yet recovered its usual regularity. The death of Sir John Moore will conclude the volume. . . . . .

Believe me,

Yours very truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Walter Savage Landor, Esq.

"March 26. 1810.

"Is it a mark of strength or of weakness, of maturity or of incipient decay, that it is more delightful to me to compose history than poetry? not, perhaps, that I feel more pleasure in the act of composition, but that I go to it with more complacency as to an employment which suits my temperament. I am loth to ascribe this lack of inclination to any deficiency of power, and certainly am not conscious of any; still I have an ominous feeling that there are poets enough in the world without me, and that my best chance of being remembered will be as an historian. A proof sheet of Kehama, or a second sight scene in Pelayo, disperses this cloud; such, however, is my habitual feeling. It did not use to be the case in those days when I thought of nothing but poetry, and lived, as it were, in an atmosphere of nitrous

oxydé, — in a state of perpetual excitement, which yet produced no exhaustion.

"The first volume of my History of Brazil makes its appearance in a few days; perhaps at this time it may have been published. This is the commencement of a long series; the History of Portugal is to follow, then that of Portuguese Asia, then a supplementary volume concerning the African possessions. Lastly, if I have life, health, and eye-sight permitted me, the history of the Monastic Orders; sufficient employment for a life, which I should think well employed in completing them. . . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Walter Scott, Esq.

"Durham, May 11. 1810.

"My dear Scott,

"Yesterday evening, on my return from the race-ground, I found your poem * lying on the table. A provoking engagement called me from it for two or three hours; but notwithstanding this, and my obstinate habit of getting early to bed, I did not go to rest till I had finished the book. Every reader's first thought, when he begins to think at all, will be to compare you with yourself. If I may judge from my own feelings, the Lady will be a greater favourite than either of her elder brethren. There is in all,

* The Lady of the Lake.

the same skilful inscrutability of story till the artist is pleased to touch the spring which lays the whole machine open; but while the plot is thus well wound up in the new poem, I think the narrative is more uniformly perspicuous than in the two former. There is in all, the like originality and beauty of circumstances. I am not willing to admit that some of the situations in the Lay and Marmion *can* be outdone, and if I thought they *were* outdone last night, and still incline to think so, it is probably because new impressions are more vivid than the strongest recollection.

"I wished most of the songs away on the first perusal; on recurring to them, I was glad they were there; yet, wherever they interrupt the narrative, without in any way tending to carry on the business of the story, my admiration of the things themselves does not prevent me from thinking them misplaced. Your title is likely to be a popular one; and for that very reason, I wish it had not been chosen. Of course it led me to expect some tale of Merlin or King Arthur's days; but what is of real consequence to one who loves old lays is, that whenever hereafter the Lady of the Lake will be mentioned, most readers will suppose your Ellen is intended; and in this way a sort of offence against antiquity has been committed. This is something in the manner of Momus's criticism, to find fault with the trinkets of the Lady and with her name. But I heartily give you joy of the poem, and congratulate you with perfect confidence upon the success which you have a right to expect, which you deserve, and which you will find. The

portrait seems more like the more I look at it; and my friend Camp is now doubly immortalised. This reminds me of the dog in the poem, — an incident so fine that it bears as well as courts comparison with one of the most affecting passages in Homer.

"Longman was instructed to send you my Brazil. I hope to get a long spell at the concluding volume before it is necessary to fall seriously to work upon the second Register. What you will think of Kehama I am not quite sure, — of what the public will think, I can have, and never have had, the slightest doubt. No subject could have been devised more remote from human sympathies; and there are so few persons who are capable of standing aloof from them, that the subject must be admitted to have been imprudently chosen, if in choosing it I had had any other motive than that of pleasing myself and some half a dozen others. If it had been my intention to provoke censure, I could not have done it more effectually; for without intending any innovation, or being at first sensible of any, I have fallen into a style of versification as unusual as the ground-work of the story; with this, however, I am well satisfied. I have written the first canto of Pelayo in blank verse, and without machinery. This promises to be a striking poem, and, if it were ready now, might perhaps, in some degree, be a useful one.

"The metre of the Lady is to me less agreeable than the more varied measure. There is an advantage in writing in a metre to which one has been little accustomed; it necessarily induces a certain change of style, and thus enables the writer to clothe his old

conceptions in so different a garb, that they appear new even to himself. The alteration which you have made is not sufficiently great to obtain this advantage, — and there is a loss of variety, from which I should have predicted a loss of freedom and a loss of power. This, however, is amply confuted by the poem, which certainly is never deficient either in force or freedom.

"I shall return home in the course of a fortnight; a short interval of idleness makes me feel impatient to get once more to my books and my desk. Pray remember me to Mrs. Scott, and believe me,

Very affectionately yours,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To the Rev. Herbert Hill.

"Keswick, May 30. 1810.

"My dear Uncle,

"

. . . . . .

My Register work was finished before I left home. . . . . An interval of idleness, which is to me more wearisome than any labour, has given me new appetite for employment, and I am now busily occupied with my second volume*, to which, with such alternations of work for the Review as are always wholesome as well as convenient (for over-application to any one subject disturbs my sleep, and I have long learnt by neutralising as it were, one set of thoughts with another, to sleep as sweetly as a child), I shall

* Of the "History of Brazil."

devote the next three months uninterruptedly. My first volume seems to be well liked by my friends; they all speak of it as amusing, which I was at one time apprehensive it would not be.

"Murray the bookseller, with whom the Quarterly has led me into a correspondence, promises to procure for me a MS. history of Lima, written by one of its viceroys. I shall be glad to see it, and am a good deal obliged by this mark of attention on his part; but those books upon Paraguay would be far more useful at this time, for I have no other guides than Charlevoix, and the mutilated translation of Techo, in Churchill. Luckily, a very brief summary of events is all that I am called upon, or indeed, consistently with the main purpose and plan of the work, ought to give; still it is impossible to do this to my own satisfaction, unless I feel myself thoroughly acquainted with the whole series of events. . . .

"Scott sent me his poem to Durham. I like it better than either Marmion or the Lay, though its measure is less agreeable; but the story has finer parts, and is better conceived. The portraits both of Camp and his master are remarkably good. He talks of a journey to the Hebrides; but, if that does not take place, of a visit southward; in which case, Keswick will be taken on his way, and we are to concoct some plan for employing Ballantyne's press.

"The old Douay establishment is removed to England, to a place called Ushaw, about four miles from Durham. They began it upon a Bank of Faith system, after Huntingdon's manner, having only 2000*l.* to begin with. The 2000*l.* have already been

expended, and pretty near as much more will go before it is completed. There are 100 students there already, chiefly boys; and preparations are making for doubling the number. I rode over with Henry, and one of his Catholic friends, to look after the library. The philosophical tutor showed me a volume of the Acta Sanct. Benedictorum,— 'Saints, as they choose to call them,' said he. In the evening, however, the Ecclesiastical Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxons, by this very Mr. ——, were put into my hands; and there he relates miracles, and abuses Turner for what he calls *his* Romance of St. Dunstan! These fellows are all alike. I asked what the number of the English Catholics was supposed to be, and was told 300,000. This is most likely exaggerated. I should not have guessed them at half. God bless you!

R. S."

To John May, Esq.

"Keswick, August 5. 1810.

"My dear Friend,

"Whatever you may think of my part in the Register in other respects, you will, I am sure, be well-pleased with the perfect freedom which inspires it. It will offend many persons and will please no party: but my own heart is satisfied, and that feeling would always be to me a sufficient reward. And even if it should injure me in a political point of view (as it probably may), by cutting off the prospect of

obtaining anything from Government beyond the pension . . . . . still I believe that even the balance of selfish prudence, though Mr. Worldy-wiseman himself were to adjust the scales, would prove in my favour. For I confidently expect that this work will materially increase my reputation among the booksellers; and, indeed, as long as I continue to be engaged in it, I shall need no other means of support. In the second part of the volume you will see me abundantly praised and most respectfully censured. I know not who the critic is, nor can I guess; he is very showy and sufficiently shallow. . . . . As for my contempt of the received rules of poetry, I hold the same rules which Shakspeare, Spencer, and Milton held before me, and desire to be judged by those rules; nor have I proceeded upon any principle of taste which is not to be found in all the great masters of the art of every age and country wherein the art has been understood. When the critic specifies parts of my writings to justify his praise, he overlooks every thing which displays either a knowledge of human nature, or a power of affecting the passions, and merely looks for a specimen of able versification. . . . . .

"God bless you!

Yours very affectionately,

R. S."

To Walter Scott, Esq.

"Keswick, Sept. 17. 1810.

"My dear Scott,

"In the Courier of the 15th (which has this evening reached us) is an article pretending to exhibit imitations from your poems, and signed S. T. C. At the first sight of this I was certain that S. T. Coleridge had nothing to do with it; and upon putting the paper into his hands, his astonishment was equal to mine. What may be the motive of this dirty trick Heaven knows. I can only conjecture that the fellow who has practised it, designs in some other paper or magazine to build up a charge of jealousy and envy in Coleridge, founded upon his own forgery. Coleridge declares he will write to the Courier disavowing the signature. I know he means to do it; but his actions so little correspond to his intentions, that I fear he will delay doing it, very probably, till it is too late. Therefore I lose no time in assuring you that he knows nothing of this petty and paltry attack, which I have no doubt, from whatever quarter it may have come, originates more in malice towards him than towards you.

"I was not without hopes of seeing you in this land of lakes, on your way from the Yorkshire Greta; but happening to see Jeffrey about a fortnight ago, he told me that you were settled at Ashiestiel for the autumn. I say happening to see him, because his visit was to Coleridge, not to me; and he told C. that he had not called immediately on me, as he did not know what my feelings might be towards him, &c.

"You have probably seen my labours in the Register. Upon almost all points of present politics I believe there is little difference of opinion between us; and every where, I think, you will give me credit for fair dealing as well as plain speaking. At present I am working very hard upon the second volume; it is an employment which interests me very much, and I complain of nothing but the want sometimes of sufficient documents respecting the Spanish war. Particularly I regret the want of detailed accounts of the second siege of Zaragoza and the siege of Gerona, that I might be enabled to present a full record of those glorious events. I suppose you know the whole secret history of the Register, otherwise I would tell you how liberally the Ballantynes have behaved to me. They will probably find their account in having engaged a man who writes with such perfect freedom; for though parts of the work may, and indeed will, offend all parties in turn, still there is a decided character of impartiality about it, which will prove the surest recommendation.

"Kehama has travelled so slowly through the press, that, instead of appearing at the end of one season, it will be ready about the beginning of the next. I expect every body to admire my new fashion of printing (though unfortunately the printers did not fall into it for the first three or four sheets); if any thing else is admired — *ponamus lucro.* My unknown critic in the Register will think that I am going against wind and tide with a vengeance, instead of sailing, according to his advice, with the stream. But if he or any body else should imagine

that I purposely set myself in opposition to public opinion, they are very much mistaken. I do not think enough about public opinion for this to be possible. In planning and executing a poem no other thought ever occurs to me than that of making it as good as I can. When it is finished the ostrich does not commit her eggs with more confidence to the sand and the sun, and to mother nature, than I 'cast it upon the waters,'—sure if it be good that it will be found after many days.

"It gratified me much to hear that you had been interested with my first volume of Brazil. The second will contain more stimulating matter; but it is from the history of Portugal that I think you will derive most amusement, so full will it be of high chivalrous matter and beautiful costume. Pelayo comes on slow and sure, thoroughly to my own mind as far as it has advanced.

Yours very truly,

R. SOUTHEY."

To Walter Savage Landor, Esq.

"Keswick, Jan. 11. 1811.

"I am brooding a poem upon Philip's War with the New Englanders, which was the decisive struggle between the red and white races in America. Nothing can be more anti-heroic than stiff puritan manners; but these may be kept sufficiently out of sight; and high puritan principles are fine elements to work with. One of my main characters is a

Quaker, an (ideal) son of Goffe the regicide. A good deal of original conception is floating in my mind, and there is no subject in which my own favourite feelings and opinions could be so fully displayed. It has taken strong hold on me, and if my mind was but made up as to the fittest form of metre, I should probably begin it forthwith, and continue it and Pelayo together, having the one to turn to when the way was not plain before me in the other. Hexameters would not be more difficult than any other metre, but they will not allow of the necessary transition from the narrative to the dramatic style without too great a discrepancy. The manner of Kehama would not do: the narrative is pitched too high, the dialogue too low, for a poem in which the circumstances will be less elevated than the passion. For this very reason rhyme I fear is required.

"You have done wonders with C. Julian. 1200 lines in a week were the quickest run (in sailors' phrase) that I ever made. But this is nothing to what you have accomplished; and your manner involves so much thought (excess of meaning being its fault), that the same number of lines must cost thrice as much expense of passion and of the reasoning faculty to you than they would to me. I am impatient to see this tragedy. I hear nothing of Kehama except that forty copies have been sold at Edinburgh, and that Scott has reviewed it for the next Quarterly.

"What is the meaning of the monogram in the title-page of your Ode to Gustavus? I never read your Latin without wishing it were English and

regretting that you were ever taught a language so much inferior to your own.

"Your abhorrence of Spencer is a strange heresy. I admit that he is inferior to Chaucer (who for variety of power has no competitor except Shakspeare), but he is the great master of English versification, incomparably the greatest master in our language. Without being insensible to the defects of the Fairy Queen, I am never weary of reading it. Surely Chaucer is as much a poet as it was possible for him to be when the language was in so rude a state. There seems to be this material point of difference between us, — you think we have little poetry which was good for any thing before Milton; I, that we have little since, except in our own immediate days. I do not say there was much before, but what there was, was sterling verse in sterling English. It had thought and feeling in it. At present, the surest way to become popular is to have as little of either ingredient as possible.

"Have you read Captain Pasley's book? I take it for my text in the next Quarterly, and would fain make it our political Bible.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Jan. 25. 1811.

"My dear Rickman,

"Thank you for the East India Report and for the Bardett papers. Your notes upon Parliamentary

Reform are now lying in my desk to be introduced immediately after the foolish plan which he proposed in 1805, — a plan which could do no possible good. It is downright absurdity to suppose that the House of Commons can be a pure representative body, when there is always a regular party organised against the government of the country, and consequently in semi-alliance with the enemy. Such a state of things (which never existed anywhere else, and, as you will say, could not exist here but by favour of old Neptune), was unknown to our old laws of Parliament; and it is therefore a manifest fallacy to argue from those laws against practices which are rendered necessary by the existing system, and without which there could be no government. The evil which I wish to see remedied is the aggregation of landed property, which gives to such a man as —— the command of whole counties, and enables such men as —— to sing 'we are seven,' like Wordsworth's little girl, into the ear of a minister, and demand for himself situations which he is unfit for. This is a worse evil than that which our mortmain statutes were enacted to remedy, for it is gradually rooting out the yeomanry of the country, and dwindling the gentry into complete political insignificance. It is not parliamentary reform which can touch this evil: some further limitation of entail, or a proper scheme of income taxation, might. Concerning parliamentary reform, indeed, my views are much changed; and Sir F. Burdett's scheme has not a little contributed to the alteration, elucidated as it is by all his subsequent conduct. The phrase, in-

deed, like Catholic Emancipation, is *vox et præterea nihil.*

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Mr. Ebenezer Elliott.

"Keswick, Feb. 7. 1811.

"I will willingly find fault with your play when you can find means of sending it me; that is, I will gladly, if it be in my power, point out in what manner it may be fitted for representation should it require alteration and appear capable of being so altered. Of managers and greenrooms I know nothing. Old Cumberland once said to me in his characteristic way, 'Whatever you do, Sir, never write a play! the torments of the damned are nothing to it.' I myself suspect that if a man suffers any thing like purgatory in a greenroom it must be his own fault. I would send my play there, and if it was accepted they might mutilate it as they pleased, because the actors, generally speaking, must be the best judges of what will *tell* on the stage, and because the author can always restore the piece to its original state when he prints it.

"I am sorry you should have suspected anything like a reproach upon 'single blessedness' in women in what is said of Lorrinité.* Nothing could be farther from my thoughts. The passage has nothing beyond an individual reference to the witch herself,

* Curse of Kehama, canto XI. verse 3.

therein described as a '*cankered* rose.' You may find abundant proof in my writings, and would require none if you knew me, that no man can be more innocent of such opinions as you seem to have suspected. So far am I from not regarding continence as a virtue.

"Those unaccountable *clicks* as you call them in the middle of the lines, are, as you must have seen, too frequent to be accidental. I went upon the system of rhyming to the ear regardless of the eye, and have throughout availed myself of the power which this gave me. The verse was no bondage to me. If I do not greatly deceive myself, it unites the advantages of rhyme with the strength and freedom of blank verse in a manner peculiar to itself. As far as I can judge (which is of course and must be from very imperfect and partial means) the story seems not to have shocked people as much as I expected, but that it should become popular is impossible. Many years must elapse before the opinion of the few can become the law of the many.

"I have fallen in love with the American subject which did not strike your fancy, and have half mounted it into a story of which a primitive Quaker is the hero; a curious character you will say for heroic poetry, — certainly an original one.

"If ever you think upon political subjects, I beseech you read Capt. Pasley's Essay on Military Policy, — a book which ought to be not only in the hands but in the heart of every Englishman. Farewell!

Yours very truly,

R. SOUTHEY."

To Walter Savage Landor, Esq.

"Keswick, Feb. 12. 1811.

"I am not disappointed in Count Julian; it is too Greek for representation in these times, but it is altogether worthy of you. The thought and feeling which you have frequently condensed in a single line, is unlike anything in modern composition. The conclusion too is Greek. I should have known this play to be yours had it fallen in my way without a name. There was one written ten years ago by Rough which *aimed* at being what this *is*; this has the profundity which was attempted there. I see nothing to be expunged, but I see many of what a school-boy would call *hard* passages. Sometimes they are like water, which however beautifully pellucid, may become dark by its very depth. Your own vase of tarnished gold is a better illustration; the very richness of the metal occasions its darkness. Sometimes they are like pictures,—unless you get them in precisely the right point of view, their expression is lost. I cannot tell how this is to be remedied if it is remediable; it is what makes the difference between difficult and easy authors. I will not yet specify what the passages are which are obscure, because, upon every fresh perusal, some of them will flash upon me.

"Never was a character more finely conceived than Julian. That image of his seizing the horses is in the very first rank of sublimity; it is the grandest image of power that ever poet produced.

"You could not have placed the story in a finer dramatic light; but it has made you elevate some vile renegadoes into respectability. In my plan Sisabert will die by Florinda's hand, and Orpas will be cut down by Rodrigo's own hand. I go on very slowly; what I have done is too good to be sacrificed; but it will make the poem as faulty in structure as Shakspeare's Julius Cæsar; and I shall be a third of the way through it before Pelayo appears. My pace will soon be quickened; the way opens before me; hitherto there has been but one personage in view; to-morrow I introduce others, and shall soon get into the business of the poem. You wonder that I can think of two poems at once; it proceeds from weakness, not from strength. I could not stand the continuous excitement which you have gone through in your tragedy: in me it would not work itself off in tears; the tears would flow while in the act of composition, and would leave behind a throbbing head and a whole system in the highest state of nervous excitability, which would soon induce disease in one of its most fearful forms. From such a state I recovered in 1800 by going to Portugal, and suddenly changing climate, occupation, and all internal objects: and I have kept it off since by a good intellectual regimen.

"When I have read Count Julian again and again, I will then make out a list of the passages which appear so difficult that ordinary readers may be supposed incapable of understanding them. When you perceive that they may be difficult to others, it will be easy, in most instances, to make the meaning

more obvious. Then you must print the tragedy. It will not have many more admirers than Gebir; but they will be of the same class and cast; and with Gebir it will be known hereafter, when all the rubbish of our generation shall have been swept away.

"What will you do next? Narrative is better than dramatic poetry, because it admits of the highest beauties of the drama; there are two characters in Roman history which are admirably fit for either; but in both cases their history suits the drama better than the epic—Sertorius and Spartacus. When I was a boy, the abortive attempt at restoring the republic by Caligula's death was one of my dramatic attempts. Another was that impressive story in Tacitus of 300 slaves (I think that was the number) put to death for not preventing the murder of their master, whom one of them had killed. The Emperor Majorian is a fine character. I wish I could throw out a subject that would tempt you, but rather to a poem than a play; for though your powers for both are equal, and the play the more difficult work of the two, yet in my judgment the poem is the preferable species of composition.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, Feb. 16. 1811.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"If I had not heard of you from Gifford at the beginning of the month, I should have been very uneasy about you." Thank you for your letter, and for your serviceable interpolation of the review*, which is just what it should be, — that is to say, just what I would wish it, only I wish you would not call me the most sublime poet of the age, because, in this point, both Wordsworth and Landor are at least my equals. You will not suspect me of any mock-modesty in this. On the whole, I shall have done greater things than either, but not because I possess greater powers.

"My abode under Skiddaw will have been more unfavourable to my first year's Annals than to any other, because I had fewer channels of information opened, and because of home politics I was very ignorant, never liking them well enough to feel any interest beyond that of an election feeling. Now that it becomes my business to be better informed, I have spared no pains to become so; and the probability is, that I learn as much political news to my purpose by letters, as I should do by that intercourse which would be compatible with my way of life. Of three points I have now convinced myself, that the great

* This refers to a reviewal of Kehama, which Mr. Bedford had written for the Quarterly, not knowing that Sir Walter Scott had one in preparation. The latter was the one inserted.

desideratum in our own government is a Premier instead of a Cabinet,—that a regular opposition is an absurdity which could not exist anywhere but in an island, without destroying the government,—and that parliamentary reform is the shortest road to anarchy.

"I am sincerely obliged to Gifford for his desire to serve me, and sincerely glad that I stand in need of no services,—not that I am by any means above being served, or feel any ways uncomfortable under an obligation. On the contrary, I should hold myself in the highest degree obliged to any person who would promote Tom for my sake; but for this we must wait till the First Lord is in power. For myself, I am in a fair way of wanting nothing; and if great men will but give me their praise*, they may keep their promises for others; their praise would prove actual puddings; let them only make it the fashion to buy my books, and in seven years' time I will purchase a house and ground enough for the use of a dairy within a day's journey of London. Scott had 2000 guineas for the Lady of the Lake. If Canning would but compare Bonaparte to Kehama in the House of Commons, I might get half as much by my next poem.

"I am reviewing Pasley's book—the most important political work that ever appeared in any country.

* Your article on the Evangelical Sects is much admired, and a few days ago, Perceval mentioned it in terms of the highest praise at his own table. Herries, who was present, told him that you were the author of it, and he did not praise it one whit the less on that account, but said it was the fairest, most candid, and comprehensive view he had ever seen of any subject." — *G. C. B. to R. S., Feb.* 6. 1811.

The minister who shall first become a believer in that book, and act upon its unanswerable principles, will obtain a higher reputation than ever statesman did before him. My review will be conciliatory towards the husbanding politicians, that is, it will endeavour to make them ashamed without making them angry. The blistering plaister for Whitbread goes all into the Register.

"Abella supplies me well with Spanish papers. I have found him excellently useful. He writes to me in —issimos of esteem; and I outstep a little the usual pace of English compliments in return, and am his friend and servant in superlatives — with a good conscience, believe me, for I really like him, and am very sensible of his services. Of course I have sent him my best works, and no doubt my name will soon be in high odour in the Isle of Leon. It was a mortification to me to hear he was about to return before I could see him in London. . . . .

"I have again taken to Pelayo, after a long interval, and the third section is nearly finished. It will bring me into busier scenes, and the story will begin to open. I am afraid that, having thus begun *ab ovo*, I must change the title of the poem, and call it Spain restored, for Pelayo cannot appear till I have got on a thousand lines. If I cared about rules, this would be a fault; but the structure must depend upon the materials, and I have not too much of Roderick in the beginning, considering the part he has to play in the end.

"The capture of the Isle of France is a good thing. We must now look to the Persian Gulf and

the Red Sea, and take especial care to keep the French out of those important points — important as to the means they afford of annoying us in their hands, or of spreading civilisation in ours. Next year I purpose to give a whole chapter to the French intrigues with Persia, and their views in that quarter. I have neither time nor room for it in the present volume.

"I most heartily rejoice that the Outs are Outs still.

R. S."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Feb. 20. 1811.

"My dear Rickman,

. . . . . .

"I have it under the hand of —— that any new ministry *must* recall our troops from Spain and Portugal, — to which I replied by praying that he might stay out of place so long as he thought so.

. . . . . .

"When I read L. Goldsmid's* book about France, the impression it made upon me was, that he was sent over by Bonaparte to further his purposes here. God knows by what other means, but specially by publishing such outrageous and absurd stories *against* him as should give his good friends a plea for disbelieving anything against a man who was so palpably calumniated. For instance, that B.,

* L. Goldsmid was editor of the Argus in 1801; and was at this time editing the Antigallican Monitor.

when at the military college, poisoned a woman who was with child by him; that this *is* a lie, *I* know, because I happen to know a person resident in the same town, at whose house B. was in the habit of visiting, and from whom I learnt that his character was exactly what you would suppose — very studious and very correct. That it *must* be a lie is obvious, because such things could not be done with more impunity in France than in England; and to say that it might have been concealed, leads to the obvious question, 'If so, how came L. Goldsmid to know it?' A still grosser and more ridiculous story is, that Bonaparte makes his poison by giving arsenic to a pig, and tying the pig up by the hind legs, and collecting what runs from his mouth. . . .

"Now, the man is no fool, and it is not possible that he can believe this himself, or that he can suppose it can be believed by any person of common sense. For what purpose, then, can he publish such lies?

"If he be the rascal which I take him to be, his newspaper shows what is the main purpose for which he has been sent over — to put the Bourbons into Bonaparte's hands. He recommends a Bourbon to be at the head of the army in Spain — a Bourbon to land in France. Now, there can be no doubt this is what B. would above all things desire. . .

. . . . . .

Farewell!

R. S."

To Walter Scott, Esq.

"Keswick, April 2. 1811.

"My dear Scott,

"You can probably tell me how I could transmit a copy of Kehama to your friend Leyden, for whom, though I do not personally know him, I have always felt a very high respect, regarding him, with one only exception (which might be more properly expressed to any person than to you,) as a man of more true genius and far higher promise than any of his contemporary countrymen.

"No doubt you have seen Pasley's Essay. It will be, in the main, a book after your own heart, as it is after mine. He talks sometimes of conquest when he should talk of emancipation. A system of unlimited conquest leads at last to the consequences which we have seen exemplified in the fate of the Roman empire. For ourselves, I would wish no other accession of dominion than Danish Zealand and Holland in the North, with as many islands as you please in the Mediterranean; Italy to be formed into one independent state under our protection, as long as it needed it. I believe, that the Ministry do not want the inclination to act vigorously; but they want public opinion to go before and protect them against the opposition. These men, and their coadjutors, the Morning Chronicle and the Edinburgh Review, have neither patriotism, nor principle, nor feeling, nor shame, to stand in their way. They go on predicting the total conquest of the Peninsula, with as much effrontery as if they had not predicted it two

years ago, — nay, even asserted that it was then completed; and they deliver their predictions in such a way, that it requires more charity than I possess not to believe that they wish to see them fulfilled; for this is the last and worst, yet the necessary, effect of party spirit, when carried so far as these politicians carry it. I do not know that I ever regretted being alone so much as when the news of Graham's victory arrived. It gave me more delight than I could well hold, and I wanted somebody to share it with me. We shall have great news, too, from Portugal. Massena has no lines to fall back upon; and if Lord Wellington can but bring him to action, we know what the result must be. How happy his retreat must make Lord Grenville, who had just delivered so wise an opinion upon the state of Portugal in the House of Lords!

"Longman's new Review will interfere with the Quarterly; and so far as it succeeds, so far will it prevent the extension of our sale. I have not learnt who are the proprietors of it, — not Longman himself, for he wrote to me some eight or ten weeks ago, wishing me to bear a part in it, and giving me to understand that it was set on foot by some independent M.Ps., so at least I understood his language. Of course I returned a refusal, upon the ground of my previous connection with the Quarterly. They have set out better than we did, though they have a considerable portion of heavy matter, and their first article ought to have been in a very different tone.

Yours ever truly,

R. SOUTHEY."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, April 21. 1811.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"I have some news to tell you of my own family. Mr. T. Southey is dead: about half his property he has left to the son of a friend of his at Bristol, and the rest to his man Tom, and a few other such objects of his regard. This conduct towards me and my brothers is neither very surprising nor very blameable; we lived at a distance from him, and, when he did see us, he saw animals of so very different a nature from himself, that the wonder would have been if he had taken any pleasure in their society. But he has a sister, now advanced in life, and ill provided for; and she kept his house till he turned her out of it, for no other reason than that she discovered some regret at seeing the foot-boy Tom preferred to her nephews; and he has not left her anything. This is wicked and unnatural conduct. My account comes from her. She says nothing of herself, and, I verily believe, thinks nothing upon that score; but her letter is an affecting one. 'I hope God will forgive him (these are her concluding words). John made himself a slave to get this trash; Thomas has made himself a fool to give it away.* I hope neither you nor yours will ever want it.' The property thus disposed of is about 1000*l.* a-year. An estate of half that value was left by the elder brother

* This property had been left to Thomas Southey by his elder brother John.

to a farmer's son, whom the father used to send sometimes with a hare.

"You know me well enough to know that no man living more thoroughly understands what Shenstone called the flocci-nauci-nihili-pilification of money. I had no expectations, and, consequently, have experienced no disappointment. God be praised for it! I have, also, no want. My employment (provided I write prose) is sufficiently paid; I have plenty of it; and like it as well as if it were merely the amusement of leisure hours. And, in case of my death before I shall have been able to make a provision for my family, my life is insured for 1000*l.*; and the world must be worse than I believe it to be if my operas should not produce enough in addition to that. . .

"I have another piece of news, which did surprise me. Brougham has been commissioned to apply to my uncle for the purpose of discovering whether I would undertake to translate Lucien Bonaparte's poem. My uncle replied, he supposed not, but referred the plenipotentiary to me; and no further proceedings have taken place. When I hear from B. I shall recommend Elton for the task, who translates well, and will, probably, be glad of a task which is likely to be so well paid. This has amused me very much; but it has rather lowered Lucien in my opinion, by the vanity which it implies. If his poem be good for anything, he may be sure it will find translators: it looks ill to be so impatient for fame as to look about for one, and pay him for his work. From whom the application to my worship came I do not know; Lucien has probably applied

to some friend to recommend him to the best hand; and, dispatch being one thing required, the preference has, perhaps, on this score, been given to me over Mr. Thomas Campbell; by which, no doubt, I am greatly flattered.—To Grosvenor Bedford I may say that, if the poem in question be a bad one, it will not be worth translating; and, if it be otherwise, I humbly conceive that the time which would be required to translate it may quite as worthily be bestowed upon some work of my own.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, June 9. 1811.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"I completed the Register last night. Its enormous length has cost me at least three months' labour more than the former volume, the whole of which is dead loss of the only capital I possess in the world. This is considerably inconvenient; half that time would have sufficed for the Life of Nelson, the other half have set me forward for the next three numbers of the Quarterly. My ways and means, therefore, are considerably deranged. . . . . .

"So ——— lectures to-morrow upon the Curse of Kehama! I like ——— for the same reason for which Dr. Johnson liked Mrs. Mary Cobb. 'I love Moll,' said he; 'I love Moll Cobb for her impudence.' I like ———, however, for something else; for though he is

impudentissimus homo and the very emperor of coxcombs, yet, nevertheless, —— —— is an honest fellow, and has a good heart. He is a clever fellow, too, in the midst of his quackery. And so partly because I like him for the aforesaid reasons, partly because half an hour's conversation with him will afford mirth for half a year afterwards, I will certainly call upon —— when I go to town, and shake hands with him once more. Ah, Grosvenor! people may say what they will about good company, or what Sharpe, *more suo*, denominates the '*very best*' society, — the 'VERY BEST,' — there is no company like that of an odd fellow whom you can laugh *with* and laugh *at*, and laugh *about*, till your eyes overflow with the very oil of gladness.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Walter Savage Landor, Esq.

"London, July 15. 1811.

"It is utterly unaccountable to me why you of all men should care either for good or evil report of your poems, certain as you must be of their sterling value. I look upon Gebir as I do upon Dante's long poem in the Italian, not as a good poem, but as containing the finest poetry in the language; so it is with C. Julian, and so no doubt it was with the play which you have so provokingly destroyed.

"In about three weeks I hope to see you in your turret. We leave London this day week, and I will

write from Bristol as soon as I can say when we shall depart from it. I was at Llanthony in 1798, and forded the Hondy on foot, because I could not find the bridge. Have you found St. David's cavern, which Drayton places there, and for which I inquired in vain?

"I am no botanist; but, like you, my earliest and deepest recollections are connected with flowers, and they always carry me back to other days. Perhaps this is because they are the only things which affect our senses precisely in the same manner as they did in childhood. The sweetness of the violet is always the same, and when you rifle a rose, and drink as it were its fragrance, the refreshment is the same to the old man as to the boy. We see with different eyes in proportion as we learn to discriminate, and, therefore, this effect is not so certainly produced by visual objects. Sounds recall the past in the same manner, but do not bring with them individual scenes, like the cowslip-field or the bank of violets, or the corner of the garden to which we have transplanted field flowers. Oh, what a happy season is childhood, if our modes of life and education will let it be so! It were enough to make one misanthropical when we consider how great a portion of the evil of this world is man's own making, if the knowledge of this truth did not imply that the evil is removable; and, therefore, the prime duty of a good man is by all means in his power to assist in removing it. God bless you!

R. S."

CHAPTER XVII.

SCOTT'S VISION OF DON RODERICK. — ADVICE TO A YOUNG FRIEND ON GOING TO CAMBRIDGE. — BELL AND LANCASTER CONTROVERSY. — PLAN OF THE BOOK OF THE CHURCH. — WISHES TO ASSIST MR. W. TAYLOR IN HIS DIFFICULTIES. — PROSPECT OF BEING SUMMONED TO THE BAR OF HOUSE OF COMMONS. — SHELLEY AT KESWICK. — UGLY FELLOWS. — OXFORD. — HERBERT MARSH. — TESTAMENTARY LETTER. — APPLICATION FOR THE OFFICE OF HISTORIOGRAPHER. — CATHOLIC CONCESSIONS. — MURDER OF MR. PERCEVAL. — STATE OF ENGLAND. — EDINBURGH ANNUAL REGISTER. — EXCURSION INTO DURHAM AND YORKSHIRE. — VISIT TO ROKEBY. — THE QUARTERLY REVIEW. — THE REGISTER. — 1811—1812.

To Walter Scott, Esq.

"Keswick, Sept. 8. 1811.

"My dear Scott,

"You will have thought me very remiss in not thanking you sooner for the Vision, if you did not remember that I had been travelling from Dan to Beersheba, and take into consideration how little opportunity can be found for the use of pen and ink in the course of a series of runaway visits, during a journey of nine hundred miles. It was given me at the Admiralty the very day that it arrived there. I opened it on the spot, discovered that a letter to Polwhele had been inclosed to me, in time for Croker to rectify the mistake by making a fair exchange, and thus saving mine from a journey to the Land's End. If, however, I have not written to you about D.

Roderick, I have been talking to every body about him. The want of plan and unity is a defect inherent in the very nature of your subject, and it would be just as absurd to censure the Vision for such a defect, as it is to condemn Kehama because all the agents are not human personages. The execution is a triumphant answer to those persons who have supposed that you could not move with ease in a metre less loose than that of your great poems. To me it appears, on the whole, better written than those greater works, for this very reason — you have taken fewer licences of language, and have united with the majesty of that fine stanza (the most perfect that ever was constructed) an ease which is a perfect contrast to the stiffness of Gertrude of Wyoming.

"It is remarkable that three poets should at once have been employed upon Roderick. I have a tragedy of Landor's in my desk, of which Count Julian is the hero: it contains some of the finest touches, both of passion and poetry, that I have ever seen. Roderick is also the pre-eminent personage of my own Pelayo, as far as it has yet proceeded. Differing so totally as we do in the complexion and management of the two poems, I was pleased to find one point of curious comparison, in which we have both represented Roderick in the act of confession, and both finished the picture highly. Our representations are so totally different, as to form a perfect contrast; yet each so fitted to the temper in which the confession is made, that it might be sworn, if you had chosen my point of time, you could have written as I have done, and that if I had written of the unrepentant king, I should have conceived of him

exactly like yourself. I copy my own lines, because I think you will be gratified at seeing a parallel passage, which never can be produced except to the honour of both: —

"'Then Roderick knelt
Before the holy man, and strove to speak:
"Thou see'st," he cried; "thou see'st" — but memory
And suffocating thoughts repress the word,
And shudderings, like an ague fit, from head
To foot convulsed him. Till at length subduing
His nature to the effort, he exclaimed,
Spreading his hands, and lifting up his face,
As if resolved in penitence to bear
A human eye upon his shame, — "Thou see'st
Roderick the Goth." That name would have sufficed,
To tell its whole abhorred history.
He not the less pursued — "the ravisher!
The cause of all this ruin!" Having said,
In the same posture motionless he knelt,
Arms straightened down, and hands dispread, and eyes
Rais'd to the monk, like one who from his voice
Expected life or death.'"

"I saw but little of Gifford in town, because he was on the point of taking wing for the Isle of Wight when I arrived. The Review seems to have shaken the credit of the Edinburgh, and might shake it still more. The way to attack the enemy with most effect is to take up those very subjects which he has handled the most unfairly, and so to treat them as to force a comparison which must end in our favour. I am about to do this upon the question of Bell and Lancaster — a question on which —— has grossly committed himself.

"You may well suppose that three months' idleness has brought upon me a heavy accumulation of business. Meantime good materials for the third year's Register have reached me from Cadiz, and I have collected others respecting Sicily and the Ionian Islands. I saw the last volume on my road, and

there I could trace your hand in a powerful, but too lenient essay, upon Jeffrey's journal.

Believe me,

Yours very truly,

R. SOUTHEY."

To Mr. James White.

"Keswick, Oct. 25. 1811.

"My dear James,

"By this time you are settled at Pembroke, know your way to your rooms, the faces of your fellow collegians, and enough I dare say of a college life to find its duties less formidable, and its habits less agreeable than they are supposed to be. Those habits are said to have undergone a great reformation since I was acquainted with them;—in my time they stood grievously in need of it; but even then a man who had any good moral principles might live as he pleased if he dared make the trial; and however much he might be stared at at first for his singularity, was sure ere long to be respected for it.

"Some dangers beset every man when he enters upon so new a scene of life; that which I apprehend for you is low spirits. . . . . Walk a stated distance every day; and that you may never want a motive for walking, make yourself acquainted with the elements of botany during the winter, that as soon as the flowers come out in the spring you may begin to herbalize. A quarter of an hour every day will make you master of the elements in the course of a very few months. I prescribe for you mentally also, and this is one of the pre-

scriptions; for it is of main importance that you should provide yourself with amusement as well as employment. Pursue no study longer than you can without effort attend to it, and lay it aside whenever it interests you too much: whenever it impresses itself so much upon your mind that you dream of it or lie awake thinking about it, be sure it is then become injurious. Follow my practice of making your latest employment in the day something unconnected with its other pursuits, and you will be able to lay your head upon the pillow like a child.

"One word more and I have done with advice. Do not be solicitous about taking a high degree, or about college honours of any kind. Many a man has killed himself at Cambridge by overworking for mathematical honours; recollect how few the persons are who after they have spent their years in severe study at this branch of science, ever make any use of it afterwards. Your wiser plan should be to look on to that state of life in which you wish and expect to be placed, and to lay in such knowledge as will then turn to account. . . . . .

Believe me, my dear James,
Your affectionate friend,
R. SOUTHEY."

To John May, Esq.

"Nov. 2. 1811.

"My dear Friend,

". . . . Since our return a larger portion of my time than is either usual or convenient has been

taken up by the chance society of birds of passage; this place abounds with them during the travelling season; and as there are none of them who find their way to me without some lawful introduction, so there are few who have not something about them to make their company agreeable for the little time that it lasts.

"You have seen my article upon Bell and the Dragon in the Quarterly. It is decisive as to the point of originality, and would have been the heaviest blow the Edinburgh has ever received if all the shot of my heavy artillery had not been drawn before the guns were fired. I am going to reprint it separately with some enlargement, for the purpose of setting the question at rest, and making the public understand what the new system is, which is very little understood, and doing justice to Dr. Bell, whom I regard as one of the greatest benefactors to his species. . . . . The case is not a matter of opinion, but rests upon recorded and stated facts. I tread, therefore, upon sure ground, and taking advantage of this, I shall not lose the opportunity of repaying some of my numerous obligations to the Edinburgh Review.

. . . . . .

"Probably you have seen the manner in which the Edinburgh Annual Register is twice noticed in their last number. . . . . When the first year's volume appeared it was not even suspected who was the historian; and Jeffrey, a day or two after its publication, went for the first time into the publisher's shop, expressly to tell him how much he admired the history, saying that though he differed from the

writer on many, indeed on most points, he nevertheless must declare that it was liberal, independent, and spirited throughout, the best piece of contemporary history which had appeared for twenty years. When the second volume appeared he knew who was the author! Believe me,

Very affectionately yours,

R. SOUTHEY."

To the Rev. Herbert Hill.

"Dec. 31. 1811.

"My dear Uncle,

"The hint which I threw out concerning our English martyrs in writing upon the evangelical sects is likely to mature into something of importance. I conceived a plan which Dr. Bell and the Bishop of Meath took up warmly, and the former has in some degree bound me to execute it by sending down Fox's Book of Martyrs as soon as he reached London. The projected outline is briefly this — Under the title of the Book of the Church, to give what should be at once the philosophy and the anthology of our church history, so written as to be addressed to the hearts of the young and the understandings of the old; for it will be placed on the establishment of the national schools. It begins with an account of the various false religions of our different ancestors, British, Roman, and Saxon, with the mischievous temporal consequences of those superstitions, being the evils from which the country was delivered by its conversion to Christianity. 2dly, A picture of popery and the evils from which the Reformation delivered us.

3dly, Puritanism rampant, from which the restoration of the church rescued us. Lastly, Methodism, from which the Establishment preserves us. These parts to be connected by an historical thread, containing whatever is most impressive in the acts and monuments of the English church. How beautiful a work may be composed upon such a plan (which from its very nature excludes whatever is uninviting or tedious) you will at once perceive. The civil history would form a companion work upon a similar plan, called the Book of the Constitution, showing the gradual but uniform amelioration of society; and the direct object of both would be to make the rising generation feel and understand the blessings of their inheritance.

. . . . . .

"I am well stored with materials, having all the republished chronicles and Hooker — the only controversial work which it will be at all necessary to consult. The other books which I want I have ordered: they are Burnett and the Church Histories of Fuller, and of the stiff old non-juror, Jeremy Collier. I will send the manuscript to you before it goes to the press, for it will require an inspecting eye. Meantime, if any thing occur to you which would correct or improve the plan, such as you here see it, do not omit to communicate your advice and opinion. I have a strong persuasion that both these works may be made of great, extensive, and permanent usefulness.

. . . . . .

R. S."

To Dr. Gooch.

"Keswick, Dec. 15. 1811.

"My dear Gooch,

"I have a letter from William Taylor, of a dismal character. After stating the sum of their losses, he says, 'we cannot subsist upon the interest of what remains. The capital will last our joint lives, but I shall be abandoned to a voluntary interment in the same grave with my parents. O! that nature would realise this most convenient doom!'

"Now, my reason for transcribing this passage to you is, because it made a deep impression on me, and haunts me when I lie down at night. You know more of Norwich than I do, and more of William Taylor's connections. Who is most in his confidence? is it ——? I thought of writing directly to him. . . . . But what I would say to the person who may be most likely to enter into my wishes is, that William Taylor's friends should raise such an annuity as would secure him from penury, and at once relieve his mind from the apprehensions of it; either raising a sum sufficient to purchase it (the best way, because the least liable to accidents), or by yearly contributions; Dr. Sayers (or any other the fittest person) receiving, and regularly paying it; and he never knowing particularly from whence it comes, but merely that it is his. The former plan is the best, because, in that case, there would be only to purchase the annuity, and put the security into his hands; and this might be done without any person appearing in it, the office transmitting him the necessary documents. This, of course, is a thing upon which the very wind must not blow. Ten

years hence — or, perhaps, five — if the least desirable of these plans should be found most practicable, you and Harry may be able to co-operate in it. I am ready now, either with a yearly ten pounds, or with fifty at once. If more were in my power, more should be done: but, if his friends do not love him well enough to secure him at least 100*l.* a year, one way or other, the world is worse than I thought it.

"You do not say whether you have seen Sharon Turner. That introduction was the best I could give you, because I think it would give you a friend. You could not fail to esteem and love Turner when you knew him. He is the happiest man I have ever known; and that could not be the case if he were not a very wise as well as a very good one.

"God bless you!

R. SOUTHEY."

It has been already noticed that the Edinburgh Review had recommended the Annual Register for government prosecution, on account of the boldness of its language on the Spanish question, and also, especially, with respect to some remarks on Mr. Whitbread. It appears that there was some likelihood of this "friendly" hint being taken, and to this the following letter refers.

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, Jan. 4. 1812.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"Concerning Whitbread, I believe, in every instance, the text of his speech will justify the comment.

You have heard of taking the wrong sow by the ear: he had better take a wild boar by the ear than haul me up to London upon this quarrel. I should tell him it was true that I had said his speeches were translated into French, and circulated through all the departments of France, but I had not said — what has since come to my knowledge — that, when they were thus circulated, nobody believed them genuine; nobody believed it possible that such speeches could have been uttered by an Englishman. I should ask the House (that is, his side of the House; and, of course, in that *humble* language becoming a person at the bar) at what time they would be pleased to let their transactions become matter for history; and I should give the party a gentle hint not to delay that time too long, for reputations, like every thing else, find their level; and if he, and such as he, do not get into history soon, they may run a risk of not getting into it at all. I should speak of the situation in which Spain and England stand to each other, and contrast my own feelings with those which he has continually expressed. I should appeal to the whole tenour of the book whether the design of the writer was to vilify Parliament, or to bring the Government into contempt. And, as an Englishman, a man of letters, and an historian, I should claim my privileges.

"Phillidor has made his appearance, and shall be returned in the first parcel, with the reviewal of Azara. Out of pure conscience, I have promised Gifford to take all these South American travellers myself, because I cannot bear that the Edinburgh should gain credit upon this subject, when I am so much better versed in it than any other man in

England possibly can be. I am heartily glad the state of South America is in Blanco's hands; it will be highly useful to the Review, and, I hope, to himself also; for he works hard, with little benefit, and, when he has once tried his strength in the Review, it will not be difficult to find other appropriate subjects for him. I have a high respect for this man's moral and intellectual character, and earnestly wish it were possible to obtain a pension, which never could be more properly bestowed. Canning has smitten the Quarterly with a dead palsy upon the Catholic Question, or else Blanco could supply such an exposition upon that subject as would entitle him to anything that Mr. Perceval could give.

"Here is a man at Keswick, who acts upon me as my own ghost would do. He is just what I was in 1794. His name is Shelley, son to the member for Shoreham; with 6000*l.* a year entailed upon him, and as much more in his father's power to cut off. Beginning with romances of ghosts and murder, and with poetry at Eton, he passed, at Oxford, into metaphysics; printed half-a-dozen pages, which he entitled 'The Necessity of Atheism;' sent one anonymously to Coplestone, in expectation, I suppose, of converting him; was expelled in consequence; married a girl of seventeen, after being turned out of doors by his father; and here they both are, in lodgings, living upon 200*l.* a year, which her father allows them. He is come to the fittest physician in the world. At present he has got to the Pantheistic stage of philosophy, and, in the course of a week, I expect he will be a Berkleyan, for I have put him

upon a course of Berkeley. It has surprised him a good deal to meet, for the first time in his life, with a man who perfectly understands him, and does him full justice. I tell him that all the difference between us is that he is nineteen, and I am thirty-seven; and I dare say it will not be very long before I shall succeed in convincing him that he may be a true philosopher, and do a great deal of good, with 6000*l.* a year; the thought of which troubles him a great deal more at present than ever the want of sixpence (for I have known such a want) did me. . . . . God help us! the world wants mending, though he did not set about it exactly in the right way. God bless you, Grosvenor!

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, Jan. 17. 1812.

"Dear Grosvenor,

"My household is affected with a complaint which I take at this time to be epidemic, — the fear of ugly fellows. In Mrs. Coleridge, perhaps, this may have originated in her dislike to you, but the newspapers have increased it. Every day brings bloody news from Carlisle, Cockermouth, &c.; last night half the people in Keswick sat up, alarmed by two strangers, who, according to all accounts, were certainly 'no beauties,' and I was obliged to take down a rusty gun and manfully load it for the satisfaction of the family. The gun has been properly cleaned to-day, and woe betide him who may be destined to receive its contents. But, in sober

truth, the ugly fellows abound here as well as in London; we are indebted for them partly to the manufactories at Carlisle, and partly to that distinguished patriot ——, who encourages the importation of Irishmen. I am looking for a dog, and I want you to provide me with more convenient arms than this old Spanish fowling piece. Buy for me, therefore, a brace of pistols, the plainer and cheaper the better, so they are good; that is, so they will stand fire without danger of bursting. Sights and hair-triggers may be dispensed with, as they are neither for show nor for duelling. And I have leave from my governess — nay, more than that, she has desired me — to send for

A Watchman's Rattle!

Think of that, G. C. B.!!! — think of that! — designed by her to give the alarm when the ugly fellows come. But oh, Grosvenor, the glorious tunes, the solos and bravuras, that I shall play upon that noble musical instrument before any such fellow makes his appearance.* God bless you!

R. S."

To Mr. James White.

"Keswick, Feb. 16. 1812.

"My dear James,

"I was glad to hear from Neville that you were comfortably settled, and growing attached to college; and glad to hear afterwards from yourself that you

* These musical anticipations were fully realised, and the performance of them was one of the amusements of my childhood.

begin to feel your ground. There is no part of my own life which I remember with so little pleasure as that which was passed at the university; not that it has left behind it any cause of self-reproach, but I had many causes of disquietude and unhappiness,—some imaginary, and some, God knows, real enough. And I cannot think of the place without pain, because of the men with whom I there lived in the closest intimacy of daily and almost hourly intercourse; those whom I loved best are dead, and there are some whom I never have seen since we parted there, and possibly never shall see more. It is with this feeling I believe, more or less, that every man who has any feeling always remembers college. Seven years ago I walked through Oxford on a fine summer morning, just after sunrise, while the stage was changing horses: I went under the windows of what had formerly been my own rooms; the majesty of the place was heightened by the perfect silence of the streets, and it had never before appeared to me half so majestic or half so beautiful. But I would rather go a day's journey round than pass through that city again, especially in the day-time, when the streets are full. Other places in which I have been an inhabitant would not make the same impression; there is an enduring sameness in a university like that of the sea and mountains. It is the same in our age that it was in our youth; the same figures fill the streets, and the knowledge that they are not the same persons brings home the sense of change which is of all things the most mournful.

"I see your name to the Bible Society, concerning which I have read Herbert Marsh's pamphlet

and Dr. Clarke's reply. Marsh may possibly be fond of controversy, because he knows his strength. He is a clear logical writer, and in these days a little logic goes a great way, for of all things it is that in which the writers of this generation are most deficient. His reasoning is to me completely satisfactory as to these two points,—that where Christians of all denominations combine for the purpose either of spreading Christianity or distributing Bibles in other countries, the cause of the general church is promoted thereby; but that when they combine together at home, as that condition can only be effected by a concession on the part of the churchmen, by that concession the Church of England is proportionally weakened. Nothing can be clearer. But though the Margaret Professor is perfectly right in his views, and his antagonists are mere children when compared to him, I think he has been injudicious in exciting the controversy, because upon that statement of the case which his opponents will make, and which appears at first sight to be a perfectly fair one, everybody must conclude him to be in the wrong, and very few persons will take the trouble of looking farther. And I think his object might have been effected by a little management without much difficulty,—by an arrangement among the Church members of the Society that the Liturgy should be appended to the Bibles which they distributed at home, or by a Prayer-book Society. A man should be very careful how he engages in a controversy, in which, however right he may be, he is certain to appear wrong to the multitude; and he ought to be especially careful, when he thus exposes

not his own character alone but that of the body to which he belongs. Besides, the mischief which Marsh perceives is not very great, because I apprehend that at least nine tenths of the business of B. Society relates to foreign countries. But I agree with him entirely as to the mischief that lurks under the name of liberality; by which is meant not an indulgence to the opinions of other communities, but an indifference to your own.

"Do you attend the Divinity Lectures? Herbert Marsh is likely to be a good lecturer, being a thorough master of his subject, and a reasoner of the old school.

"Give me a letter when you feel inclined; and believe me,

My dear James,
Your affectionate friend,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq.

"Keswick, April 15. 1812.

"My dear Wynn,

"What a number of recollections crowd upon me when I think of ——! Of all our school companions, how very few of them are there whose lots in life have proved to be what might have been expected for them. You and Bedford have gone on each in your natural courses, and are to be found just where and what I should have looked to find, if I had waked after a Nourjahad sleep of twenty years. The same thing might be said of me, if my local habitation were not here at the end of the map. I am

leading the life which is convenient for me, and following the pursuits to which, from my earliest boyhood, I was so strongly predisposed. A less troubled youth would probably have led to a less happy manhood. I should have thought less and studied less, felt less and suffered less. Now, for all that I have felt and suffered, I know that I am the better; and God knows that I have yet much to think, and to study, and to do. It is now eighteen years since you and I used to sit till midnight over your claret in Skeleton Corner, — half your life and almost half mine. During that time we have both of us rather grown than changed, and accident has had as little to do with our circumstances as with our character.

"Your godson, Herbert, who is just old enough to be delighted with the Old Woman of Berkeley, tells me he means, when he is a man, to be a poet like his father. It will be time enough ten years hence, if we live so long, to take thought as to what he shall be; the only care I need take at present, is, what should be done, in case of my death, for the provision of my family. I have insured my life for 1000*l.* I had calculated upon my copyrights as likely to prove valuable when it would become the humour of the day to regret me; but to my great surprise, I find the booksellers interpret the terms of their taking the risk and sharing the profit, as an actual surrender to them of half the property in perpetuity. Townsend, the traveller, who was as much deceived in this case as I have been, was about to try the point with them. I know not what prevented him. . . . This is a flagrant and cruel injustice. . . . . If I live, and preserve my health and faculties, I

have no doubt of realising a decent competency in twenty years; but twenty years is almost as much as my chances of life would be reckoned at in tables of calculation. . . . .

"One thing which I will do whenever I can afford leisure for the task, will be, to write and leave behind me my own Memoirs: they will contain so much of the literary history of the times, as to have a permanent value on that account. This would prove a good post obit, for there can be no doubt I shall be sufficiently talked of when I am gone.

"Such are my ways and means for the future; but if I should not live to provide more than the very little which is already done, then, indeed, the exertion of some friends would be required. An arrangement might be made with Longman to allow of a subscription edition of my works: this would be productive in proportion to the efforts that were used. I should hope, also, in such a case, that the continuance of my pension might be looked for from either of the present parties in the state, through Perceval, or Canning, or yourself.

"This is a sort of testamentary letter. It is fit there should be one; and to whom, my dear Wynn, could it so properly be addressed? By God's blessing, I may yet live to make all necessary provision myself. My means are now improving every year. I am up the hill of difficulty, and shall very soon get rid of the burthen which has impeded me in the ascent. I have some arrangements with Murray, which are likely to prove more profitable than any former speculations; and should I succeed in obtaining the office which the old Frenchman fills at present

so properly, — and which is the only thing for which I have the slightest ambition, — it would soon put me in possession of the utmost I could want or wish for, inasmuch as I could lay by the whole income, and the title would be, in a great degree, productive.

"Hitherto I have been highly favoured. A healthy body, an active mind, and a cheerful heart are the three best boons nature can bestow; and, God be praised, no man ever enjoyed them more perfectly My skin and bones scarcely know what an ailment is. my mind is ever on the alert, and yet, when its work is done, becomes as tranquil as a baby; and my spirits invincibly good. Would they have been so, or could I have been what I am, if you had not been for so many years my stay and support? I believe not; yet you had been so long my familiar friend, that I felt no more sense of dependence in receiving my main, and at one time sole, subsistence from you, than if you had been my brother: it was being done to as I would have done.

R. S."

The appointment of Historiographer, to which my father refers in the letter, appears to have fallen vacant almost immediately. Application was at once made for it in his behalf in several influential quarters; but it seems to have been filled up with extraordinary haste, having been bestowed upon Dr. Stanier Clarke, Librarian to the Prince Regent. It turned out ultimately that there was no salary attached to the office, the appointment being merely honorary.

The next letter was written immediately on hearing of the murder of Mr. Perceval.

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, May 14. 1812.

"Dear Grosvenor,

"In spite of myself I have been weeping; this has relieved the throbbings of my head; but my mind is overcharged and must pour itself out. I am going to write something upon the state of popular feeling, which will probably appear in the Courier, where it will obtain the readiest and widest circulation. Enough to alarm the people I shall be able to say; but I would fain alarm the Government, and if this were done in public they would think it imprudent, and, indeed, it would be so.

"I shall probably begin with what you say of the sensation occasioned by this most fatal event, and then give the reverse of your account as I have received it from Coleridge; what he heard in a pot-house into which he went on the night of the murder, not more to quench his thirst than for the purpose of hearing what the populace would say. Did I not speak to you with ominous truth upon this subject in one of my last hasty letters? This country is upon the brink of the most dreadful of all conceivable states — an insurrection of the poor against the rich; and if by some providential infatuation, the Burdettites had not continued to *insult* the soldiers, the existing government would not be worth a week's purchase, nor any throat which could be supposed to be worth cutting, safe for a month longer.

"You know, Grosvenor, I am no aguish politician, nor is this a sudden apprehension which has seized me. Look to what I have said of the effect of Mrs. Clarke's

business upon the public in the last year's Register, and look to the remarks upon the tendency of manufactures to this state in Espriella, written five years ago. Things are in that state at this time that nothing but the army preserves us: it is the single plank between us and the red sea of an English Jacquerie,—a Bellum Servile; not provoked, as both those convulsions were, by grievous oppression, but prepared by the inevitable tendency of the manufacturing system, and hastened on by the folly of a besotted faction, and the wickedness of a few individuals. The end of these things is full of evil, even upon the happiest termination; for the loss of liberty is the penalty which has always been paid for the abuse of it. But we must not now employ our thoughts upon the danger of our own victory, there is but too much yet to be done to render the victory certain.

"The first step should be the immediate renewal of associations for the protection of our lives and properties, and of the British constitution; with the re-establishment to the utmost possible extent of the volunteers, — as effective a force against a mob of united Englishmen as they would be inefficient in the first shock of an invasion. This may be safely said and pressed upon the Government and the people; what I dare not say publicly, is that there is yet danger from the army, — that horrid flogging, for the abolition of which Burdett has been suffered to appear as the advocate! Oh that Perceval had prevented this popularity, by coming forward himself as the soldier's friend! He has good works enough for his good name, as well as for his soul's rest; but this would have remained for his colleagues and for the country,

"This of course cannot be touched upon immediately, for it would be too obviously an act of fear; but if I knew the ministers, I would urgently press upon them the wisdom of granting some boon to the soldiers,—something which, at little cost to the nation, would yet come home to the feelings of every individual in the army. The mere institution of honorary rewards would do this, — fifty pounds in copper medals would go farther than as many thousands in bounties towards recruiting it hereafter. But I would couple it with something more; for instance, ten or twenty of the oldest men, or oldest soldiers, in every regiment which distinguished itself in the two late assaults, should have their discharge, with full pay for life, or an increase of pay if they chose to serve on. Do not think that these things are inefficacious or beneath the notice of statesmen. Why is it that poets move the heart of men, but because they understand the feelings of men, and it is by their feelings that they may be best governed. Look at the agitators; they address themselves to the passions of the mob, and who does not perceive with what tremendous effect!

"I wish you would read this to Gifford or to Herries, because I am sure that these cheap and easy measures would go far toward winning the affections of the soldiers at these perilous times. Other topics I shall speak of elsewhere — the establishment of a system of parochial education, and the necessity of colonial schemes as opening an issue in the distempered body politic. This will be for the Quarterly. Vigorous measures, I trust in God, will be taken while the feelings of the sound class are in a state

to favour them. This murder, though committed publicly by a madman, has been made the act and deed of the populace. Shocking as this appears, so it is and so it must be considered. With timely vigour, the innocent blood which has been shed may prove an acceptable sacrifice and save us; otherwise it is but the opening of the flood-gates.

"I thought of poor Herries as soon as I could think of any thing. The loss which the country has sustained I can scarcely dare to contemplate. There seems nothing to look to but the Wellesleys, with Canning, Huskisson for Chancellor of the Exchequer, and in all likelihood Sir James Mackintosh, who is sure to take the strongest side, and his talents will make him a powerful support to any party. Yet in this train there seems to follow a long catalogue of dangers: Catholic concessions, and next, by aid of all the admitted enemies of the Church, the sale of tithes to supply the necessities of the Government; a measure which will be as certainly popular as it will be ultimately ruinous to the Church and most fatal to the country. There will be a glorious war to console us; but under such circumstances I shall look to that war with the painful thought that we may be repaid for our services to the Spaniards by finding an asylum in Spain when England will have lost all that our fathers purchased for us so dearly!

"God bless you!

R. SOUTHEY.

"Tell Gifford I shall be ready for him with the French Biography, which will be a sketch of the Revolution, introducing an examination of our own state

as tending towards the same gulf. Would to God it were not so well timed! What has passed seems like a dream to me — a sort of nightmare that overlays and oppresses my thoughts and feelings."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, May 16. 1812.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"I have myself so strong a sense of Mr. Perceval's public merits, that I cannot help writing to you to say how much I wish that a statue might be erected to him. This could only be done by subscription; but surely such a subscription might soon be filled, if his friends think it advisable. Suggest this to Herries; and if the thing should be begun, when the list has the proper names to begin with, put mine down for five guineas, which could not at this time be better employed.

"The fit place for this statue would be the spot where he fell. Permission to place it there would no doubt be obtained, and the opposition made to it would only recoil upon his political enemies.

"I have often been grieved by public events, but never so depressed by any as by this. It is not the shock which has produced this; nor the extent of private misery which this wretched madman has occasioned, though I can scarcely refrain from tears while I write. It is my deep and ominous sense of danger to the country, from the Burdettites on one hand, and from Catholic concessions on the other. You know I am no high-church bigot; it would be impossible for me to subscribe to the Church Ar-

ticles. Upon the mysterious points I rather withhold assent than refuse it; not presuming to define in my own imperfect conceptions what has been left indefinite. But I am convinced that the overthrow of the Church establishment would bring with it the greatest calamities for us and for our children. If any man could have saved it, it was Mr. Perceval The repeal of the Test Act will let in Catholics, and invite more Dissenters. When the present Duke of Norfolk dies, you will have Catholic members for all his boroughs. All these parties will join in plundering the Church. No man is more thankful for the English Reformation than I am; but nearly a century and a half elapsed before the evils which it necessarily originated had subsided.

"As for conciliating the wild Irish by such concessions, the notion is so preposterous, that when I know a man of understanding can maintain such an opinion, it makes me sick at heart to think upon what sandy foundations every political fabric seems to rest!

"I have strayed on unintentionally. Go to Herries, and if he will enter into my feelings about the statue, let no time be lost. God bless you!

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"May 17. 1812.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"I received a note from Lord Lonsdale on Saturday, enclosing a reply from Lord Hertford to his

application; which reply states that a previous arrangement had been made for the office of historiographer. Thinking you would be likely to know this as soon as myself, I did not write to you. My interest was better than I expected. Upon Lord Lonsdale I had reckoned; but Scott wrote for me to Lord Melville, and seemed to depend upon success. I have now done with the state lottery. Of all things possible I most desired an appointment at Lisbon; if it had been given me when it was desired, and when it would have been honourable in Fox so to have given it, knowing as he did my motive for wishing it, it would have involved me (owing to the subsequent troubles) in pecuniary difficulties which perhaps I should never have surmounted. That hope having failed, I looked to that good ship the Historiographer, believing myself better qualified for the post than most men, and, more than any other man, ambitious of fulfilling its duties; but that good ship, it seems, is still destined to be so ill manned as to be perfectly useless.

"This evening I have a letter from Canning, couched in the most handsome and friendly terms. He does not know that the office is disposed of, but hints at difficulties in the way of his obtaining it (even supposing he were in power), which Gifford has explained. He concludes with expressions and professions of good will, which I doubt not are sincere. But there is nothing to which I can look forward.

"Say to Gifford that I must beg him to end with my article instead of beginning with it. I am close pressed with the Register, which this week will bring,

I hope and trust, to a conclusion. Mr. Ballantyne's historiographer is well paid, but the office is no sinecure.

"I wish you were here to see the country in full beauty. Your godson has just learnt to read Greek, and I expect in my next parcel a grammar and vocabulary for him. He promises well, if it please God that he should live. God bless you!

R. S."

To J. Rickman, Esq.

"May 18. 181

"My dear Rickman,

"The fate of poor Perceval has made me quite unhappy ever since I heard of it, not merely from the shock and the private misery which it is quite impossible to put out of mind, but from the whole train of evils to which this is but the beginning. I would fain have believed the report that Mr. Abbott was to take his place in the House of Commons, because, if he could have found tongue, I knew where whatever else might have been wanting was to be found. But it was not likely that he should quit a better situation for one of so much anxiety and labour. W—— and C——, I doubt not, ratted upon the Catholic question because they expected the Prince upon that ground would eject Perceval, and then they should have a better chance than the *Early Friends.* If they come in, as I fear they will, we may have the war carried on, but we shall have Catholic concessions, after which the Church property is not worth seven years' purchase; they will sell

the tithes; and the next step will be to put up the Establishment to sale in the way of contracts; the minds of the people (which, God knows, need no further poison) will then be totally unsettled, and the ship will part from her last cable on a lee shore in the height of the storm. At this moment the army is the single plank between us and destruction; and I believe the only thing doubtful is whether we shall have a military despotism *before* we go through the horrors of a *bellum servile*, or *after* it. This I am certain of, that nothing but an immediate suspension of the liberty of debate and the liberty of the press can preserve us. Were I minister, I would instantly suspend the Habeas Corpus, and have every Jacobin journalist confined, so that it should not be possible for them to continue their treasonable vocation. There they should stay till it would be safe to let them out, which it might be in some seven years. I would clear the gallery whenever one of the agitators rose to speak, and if the speech were printed, I would teach him that his privilege of attempting to excite rebellion did not extend beyond the walls of Parliament; that he might talk treason to those walls as long as he pleased, but that if he printed treason he was then answerable to the vengeance of his country. I did not forget* the main question about reading. One

* "What shall I say of the unhappy event which has happened here? I expected Mr. Perceval to be murdered; but I had expected it from the Burdettites and others rendered infuriate by the poison they imbibe from sixteen newspapers, emulous in violence and mischief. In reading your little book about Lancaster, I do not find that you discuss the main question, whether the mob can be conveniently taught reading while the liberty of the press exists as at present. Every one who reads at all reads a Sunday newspaper, not the

mouth suffices for a dozen or a score pair of ears in the tap-rooms and pot-houses, where Cobbett and Hunt are read as the evangelists of the populace. There is no way of securing the people against this sort of poison but by the old receipt of Mithridates, — dieting them from their childhood with antidotes, and making them as ready to die for their church and state as the Spaniards. We are beginning to attempt this when it is too late. A judicial fatuity seems to have been sent among us. Romanists, sectarians of every kind, your liberality men, and your philosophers of every kind and of every degree of folly and emptiness, are united for the blessed purpose of plucking up old principles by the roots, each for their own separate ends, but all sure of meeting with the same end if they are successful. We who see this danger have no power to prevent it, and they who have the power cannot be made to see it. . . . . .

"This is a melancholy strain. We must, however, work the ship till it sinks; and a vigorous minister might take advantage of the feelings of the sound part of the country at the moment, and the avowal which the Burdettites have made for strong measures of prevention. . . . . I would give the poor gratuitous education in parochial schools,— a boon which all among them who care for their children would rightly estimate; and if the work of coercion kept pace with that of conciliation, we

Bible; and if any man before doubted the efficacy of that prescription, the behaviour of the mob upon Mr. P.'s death may teach them better knowledge." — *J. R. to R. S., May* 16. 1812.

might hold on till our battle in Spain ended in the overthrow of the enemy. But where is the dictator who is to save the commonwealth? Perceval had a character which was worth as much as his talents. The only statesman who has these advantages in any approaching degree is Lord Sidmouth, but he wants those abilities which in Perceval seemed always to grow according to the measure of the occasion. Yet he would be the best head of a ministry, for the weight which his good intentions would give him. Vansittart would do for Chancellor of Exchequer, if there were any other efficient minister in the Commons.

"I am going to write upon the French Revolution for the Quarterly Review,—a well-timed subject: the evil is, that it is writing to those readers who are in the main of the same way of thinking. Our contemporaries read, not in the hope of being instructed, but to have their own opinions flattered.

Yours truly,

R. S."

The only recreation myfather permitted himself during this summer consisted of an excursion into the neighbouring county of Durham, where he had now two brothers residing; and a pedestrian tour from thence home through part of Yorkshire. His account of a visit to Rokeby will be read with interest.

To Mrs. Southey.

"Settle, Ju

My dear Edith,

"We left St. Helen's after an early breakfast on

Tuesday, with Tom in company; looked at Raby and Bernard Castle, and made our way to the porter's lodge at Rokeby. . . . . A sturdy old woman, faithful to her orders, refused us admittance, saying that if we were going to the Hall we might go in, but if not we must not enter the grounds; nor would she let us in till we had promised to call at the Hall. Accordingly, against the grain, in observance of this promise, to the house I went, and having first inquired if Walter Scott was there, requested permission to see the grounds. Mr. Morritt was not within, but the permission was granted; and in ten minutes after, the footman came running to say we might see the house also, and we might fish if we pleased. I excused myself from seeing the house, saying we were going on, and returning a due number of thanks, &c. But presently we met Mr. and Mrs. M. in the walk by the river side, and were, as you may suppose, obliged to dine and sleep there; their hospitality being so pressed upon us that I could not continue to refuse it without rudeness. Behold the lion, then, in a den perfectly worthy of him, eating grapes and pears and drinking claret. The grounds are the finest things of the kind I have ever seen. A little in the manner of Downton, more resembling Lowther, but the Greta at Rokeby affords finer scenery than either. There is a summer-house overlooking it, the inside of which was ornamented by Mason the poet: one day he set the whole family to work in cutting out ornaments in coloured paper from antique designs, directing the whole himself. It is still in good preservation, and will, doubtless, be preserved as long as a rag re-

mains. This river, in 1771, rose in the most extraordinary manner during what is still called the great flood. There is a bridge close by the summer-house at least sixty feet above the water; against this bridge and its side the river piled up an immense dam of trees and rubbish, which it had swept before it; at length down comes a stone of such a size that it knocked down Greta Bridge by the way, knocked away the whole mass of trees, carried off the second bridge, and lodged some little way beyond it upon the bank, breaking into three or four pieces. Playfair the other day estimated the weight of this stone at about seventy-eight tons; the most wonderful instance, he said, he had ever heard of of the power of water. Before this stone came down, one of the trees had blocked up an old man and his wife who inhabited a room under the summer-house; the branches broke their windows, and a great bough barred the door, meantime the water, usually some twenty feet below, was on a level with it. The people of the house came to their relief, and sawed the bough off to let them out, and the windows remain as they were left, a memorial of this most extraordinary flood.

"Mr. Morritt's father bought the house of Sir Thomas Robinson, well known in his day by the names of Long Robinson and Long Sir Thomas. You may recollect a good epigram upon this man:—

"'Unlike to Robinson shall be my song,
It shall be witty, — and it sha'nt be long.'

Long Sir Thomas found a portrait of Richardson in the house: thinking Mr. Richardson a very unfit personage to be suspended in effigy among lords,

ladies, and baronets, he ordered the painter to put him on the star and blue riband, and then christened the picture Sir Robert Walpole.. You will easily imagine Mr. Morritt will not suffer the portrait to be restored. This, however, is not the most extraordinary picture in the room. That is one of Sir T.'s intended improvements, representing the river, which now flows over the finest rocky bed I ever beheld, metamorphosed by four dams into a piece of water as smooth and as still as a canal, and elevated by the same operation so as to appear at the end of a smooth shaven green. Mr. M. shows this with great glee. He has brought there from our country the stone fern and the Osmunda regalis.* Among his pictures is a Madonna by Guido; he mentioned this to a master of a college, whose name I am sorry to say that I have forgotten, for the gentleman in reply pointed to a picture above representing an aunt of Mr. Morritt's (I believe), dressed in the very pink of the mode, and asked if that lady was the Madonna!

"I am sorry, too, that I forgot to ask if this was the lady whose needle-work is in the house. Mr. M. had an aunt who taught Miss Linwood. Wordsworth thought her pictures quite as good. In one respect they may be better, for she made her stitches athwart and across, exactly as the strokes of the original pictures. Miss L. (Mr. M. says) makes her stitches all in one way. This lady had great difficulty about her worsted, and could only suit herself by buying damaged quantities, thus obtaining shades

* The largest of the fern tribe, growing to the height of five and six feet — a rare plant even in its own districts. The finest specimens are on the river Rotha.

which would else have been unobtainable. The colours fly, and, in order to preserve them as long as possible, prints are fitted in the frames to serve as skreens. The art cost her her life though at an advanced age; it brought on a dead palsy, occasioned by holding her hands so continually in an elevated position working at the canvas. Her last picture is hardly finished; the needle, Mr. M. says, literally dropt from her hands, — death had been creeping on her for twelve years. God bless you!

R. S."

To John May, Esq.

"Keswick, Aug. 14. 1812.

"My dear Friend,

"Let me trouble you with a commission which, if it be successful, will essentially enrich my store of historical documents. I have just learnt, by accident, that there is in High Holborn a set of Muratori's great collection of the Italian historians, which, wanting one volume, is on that account offered for sale at a very low price — some five or six pounds, for a collection which I should joyfully purchase at the price of five-and-twenty, were it entire. . . . . The three great works which I want are the Acta Sanctorum, the Byzantine Historians, and Muratori; and it would be folly not to purchase this set, notwithstanding it is imperfect, when the loss of one volume so materially diminishes the price, without lessening the utility of the other volumes. I should think it, at half a guinea a volume, a cheap purchase.

"My article upon the French Revolutionists in the last Quarterly is a good deal the worse for the muti-

lation which, as usual, it has undergone, but which I regard less than I do the alteration of one single word. Speaking of 'the pilot that weathered the storm,' I wrote 'whatever may have been his merits,' and this word is altered into 'transcendant as,'—an alteration of which I shall certainly complain. Had the article been printed entire, it would have done me credit: the hint with which it concludes relates to an essay upon the state of the lower classes, which I have undertaken for the last number.

"I had yesterday the pleasure of cutting open the last volume of the Register,—a greater delight to me than it will be to any other person, I dare be sworn. This is the last and greatest of an author's pleasures. The London proprietors urge an alteration in the plan, and want it to be brought out in a single volume, like the London Annual Register; the Edinburgh proprietors very wisely negative this proposal, and determine to carry it on upon the present plan, even if they are left to themselves. The change, I think, would have been fatal to the work: whether perseverance may preserve it, is very doubtful. I go to work, however, upon the year 1811 with great good will. You will find, in the second part of this new volume, a life of Lope de Aguirre, written as a chapter for the history of Brazil, but cut out as an excrescence, for which room could not be afforded. The narrative is an extraordinary piece of history, whole and entire of itself, and so little connected with that of any other country, that it would appear equally as an excrescence in the history of Peru, or of Venezuela as in that of Brazil; so it is as well where it is as it could be anywhere else.

. . . . The ballad of the Inchcape Rock, in the same volume, is mine also, written many years ago, when I was poet to the Morning Post. I know not to whom it is obliged for its present situation, neither do I know who has been tinkering it. It lay uncorrected among my papers, because I had no use for it, unless I should ever publish a miscellaneous volume of verse. The Life of Nelson is sent to the press. I expect the first proof every day, and hope to finish the manuscript by the beginning of next month. Since my return from my late excursion, I have made good progress with Pelayo, or rather with Roderick, as the poem ought to be called. It pleases me so well, that I begin to wish other persons should be pleased with it as well as myself.

Believe me, ever,

Your affectionate friend,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

The "sketch" referred to in the following letter was a very curious production. It consisted of a series of parallelisms between the events and characters in Thalaba and certain portions of the Scriptures, drawn out with great ingenuity, and at considerable length. The view taken was as if the poem had been intended as an allegorical representation of the power and virtues of Faith.

To the Rev. John Martyn Longmire.

"Keswick, Nov. 4. 1812.

"I am truly sensible, Sir, of the honour you have conferred upon me by your letter of October 29th,

and shall be still farther gratified by a communication of the sketch which is there mentioned. My aim has been to diffuse through my poems a sense of the beautiful and good (τὸ καλὸν καὶ ἀγαθὸν) rather than to aim at the exemplification of any particular moral precept. It has, however, so happened that both in Thalaba and Kehama, the nature of the story led me to represent examples of faith. At a very early age, indeed, when I was a schoolboy, my imagination was strongly impressed by the mythological fables of different nations. I can trace this to the effect produced upon me when quite a child, by some prints in the Christian's Magazine, copied, as I afterwards discovered, from the great work of Picart. I got at Picart when I was about fifteen, and soon became as well acquainted with the gods of Asia and America, as with those of Greece and Rome. This led me to conceive a design of rendering every mythology, which had ever extended itself widely, and powerfully influenced the human mind, the basis of a narrative poem. I began with the religion of the Koran, and consequently founded the interest of the story upon that resignation, which is the only virtue it has produced. Had Thalaba been more successful, my whole design would, by this time, have been effected; for prepared as I was with the whole materials for each, and with a general idea of the story, I should assuredly have produced such a poem every year. For popular praise, *quoad* praise, I cared nothing; but it was of consequence to me, inasmuch as it affected those emoluments with which my worldly circumstances did not permit me to dispense. The sacrifice, therefore, was made to prudence, and it was

not made without reluctance. Kehama lay by me in an unfinished state for many years, and but for a mere accident, might, perhaps, for ever have remained incomplete.

"Whether the design may ever be accomplished, is now doubtful: The inclination and the power remain, but the time has passed away. My literary engagements are numerous and weighty, beyond those of any other individual; and though, by God's blessing, I enjoy good health, never-failing cheerfulness, and unwearied perseverance, there seems to be more before me than I shall ever live to get through.

. . . . . .

Believe me, Sir,
Yours, with due respect,
ROBERT SOUTHEY.

"My next mythological poem, should I ever write another, would be founded upon the system of Zoroaster. I should represent the chief personage as persecuted by the evil powers, and make every calamity they brought upon him the means of evolving some virtue, which would never else have been called into action. In the hope that the fables of false religion may be made subservient to the true, by exalting and strengthening Christian feelings."

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

LONDON:
SPOTTISWOODES and SHAW,
New-street-Square.

00024386

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 10 February, 2016